

THE BUFFALO NEWS

CENTRAL EDITION

Copyright 2009

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2009

Serving Western New York since 1880

74 PAGES • 50 CENTS



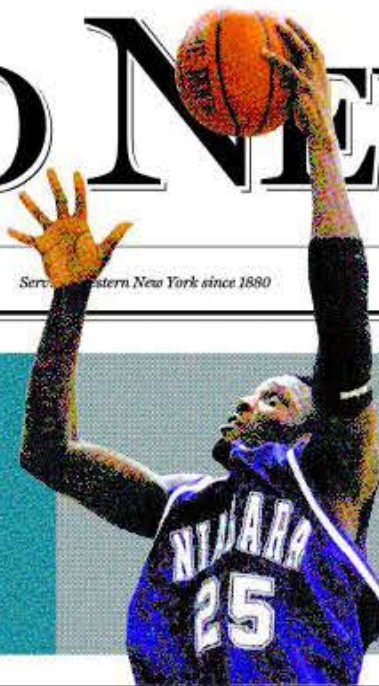
LOVE SHACK

How to put a little love in your home. Page D1



BUILDING HIS BASE

Indie rocker M. Ward has a new record and a tour date in The Buff. Gusto



BIG 4 RIVALS

Niagara knocks off Canisius, 57-41. Page C1

49 die in Clarence air crash



Harry Scull Jr./Buffalo News

A firefighter watches as huge flames from a plane crash light up the night sky in Clarence Center. Forty-nine people were reported killed as the plane hit a house on Long Street.

Dead include one on ground as Continental flight hits house

BY DALE ANDERSON
AND PHIL FAIRBANKS

NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

Forty-nine people died when a Continental Express airplane crashed into a house in Clarence Center shortly after 10 p.m. Thursday, setting off a huge fire that could be seen miles away.

The loud, fiery crash, believed to be the nation's deadliest in more than two years, claimed 44 passengers, four crew members and a person on the ground.

Among the crash victims was Beverly Eckert, the widow of Sean Rooney, who was killed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Eckert was traveling to Buffalo for a family celebration of what would have been her husband's 58th birthday.

The weekend was also to include awarding of the Sean Rooney Scholarship at Canisius High School.

A nurse at Erie County Medical Center said the hospital's second shift, told to stay late to treat survivors, was sent home before midnight.

"There were no souls to bring in and treat,"

she said.

Family members and friends identified two people believed to be on the plane as Ellyce Kausner, a graduate of Clarence High School and Canisius College, and Maddy Loftus, a Buffalo State College graduate who lives in New Jersey.

Friends said Loftus was heading here for a weekend reunion of Buffalo State women hockey players. One friend said she may have been flying with other young women heading here for the same reunion.

"You never think this is going to happen to

you," Kausner's aunt, Susan Leckey, also from Clarence, said at Buffalo Niagara International Airport. "It always happens to somebody else, and you see it on TV."

Kausner's family lives roughly a quarter-mile from the crash site.

Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority spokesman C. Douglas Hartmayer said there was little communication between the plane, Flight 3407, and the tower before the crash. Crew mem-

See **Crash** on Page A2

FOCUS: COPING WITH TOUGH TIMES

Stress of these difficult days is pushing many into mental illness

BY DEIDRE WILLIAMS
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

It's all weighing pretty heavily on Barbara Smith, a widowed grandmother who lives in the Black Rock section of Buffalo.

She fears layoffs are coming soon at her job at a local nonprofit agency. That's on top of the hours that were cut recently at her part-time job at a local florist.

And don't forget the weather: the very cold, very snowy past weeks, followed by a couple of days of warming, then 60-mph winds and wet snow that knocked out power to more than 50,000 homes and businesses.

"I guess the news is bad for everybody," Smith said, "and it just seems to get worse."

All this contributes to what experts call the new face of mental illness.

Doom and gloom seem to have dominated the news lately. Consider the headlines:

- A global economic crisis.
- A recession here at home.
- The near-daily tally of job cuts at large companies worldwide.
- Record snow and frigid temperatures locally, then flooding and a wind storm.

See **Gloom** on Page A2



"All the bad news lately makes me feel like I'm stuck. There's no change. I don't feel change is coming."
Julie Quinn,
of Amherst



"Today the modern face of mental illness includes mortgage crises, job loss, people stressed to the limit financially."
Thomas P. McNulty,
Mental Health Association

Stimulus saves N.Y. from cut in school aid

BY JERRY ZREMSKI
AND TOM PRECIOUS
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

The federal economic-stimulus bill would bring New York State \$2.7 billion in relief for schools over 27 months, more than making up for a projected \$700 million cut this year in state education aid, early projections from Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., revealed Thursday.

The compromise bill includes 35 percent more "fiscal stabilization fund" money for New York than an earlier Senate version of the bill did. The money is intended to help schools balance their budgets and avoid tax increase and layoffs.

That was just part of the boost that New York received from final negotiations over the \$790 billion package, which also dramatically increases the aid that the state and its counties had been expecting to cover their soaring Medicaid costs.

Both Schumer and Gov. David A. Paterson said they were pleased.

The bill, which the House and the Senate are expected to approve with-

See **Stimulus** on Page A2

INDEX

In today's News: Gusto

Business TodayB6
City & RegionB1
ClassifiedC6
ComicsD6
CrosswordC7, C10
Home & StyleD1
JingoD2
LotteriesB2
ObituariesB4
OpinionA8
Picture PageC8
SportsB1
TelevisionC4

WEATHER

Sun and clouds, a couple of snow showers. High temperature 32, low 17. Details on Page B10.



Harry Scull Jr./Buffalo News

Tae Stark discovered Thursday morning in Cheektowaga that an umbrella would do no good.

INSIDE THE NEWS

Gregg withdraws as Cabinet choice

WASHINGTON — Citing "irresolvable conflicts" with President Obama's economic policies, Sen. Judd Gregg, R-N.H., abruptly withdrew as commerce secretary nominee Thursday, leaving the White House facing its third Cabinet withdrawal. Story on A5.

Economic crisis called top threat

WASHINGTON — The global economic crisis is the largest near-term security threat to the United States, with the potential to spawn political instability worldwide, President Obama's national intelligence director told Congress on Thursday. Story on A4.



WEB SAMPLER

Live from Daytona, it's auto racing writer Keith McShea, to talk about Sunday's Daytona 500. Go to the Sports Ink blog at buffalonews.com at 11 a.m. today to talk turbos.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE



The tail assembly of the Continental plane that was arriving from Newark, N.J., is visible at the right, with the plane's fuselage on fire in the house of Long Street in Clarence Center.

Bill Wippert/Bufalo News

Clarence plane crash scene described as chaotic

CRASH • from A1

bers aboard the flight from Newark Airport had reported mechanical problems as they approached Buffalo.

"I was told by the tower the plane simply dropped off the radar screen," Hartmayer said.

Initial reports said the crash site was 6050 Long St., not far from the Clarence Center Fire Hall on Clarence Center Road. Police said one man was in the residence at the time of the crash.

About 12 other nearby homes were evacuated. Several of them sustained fire damage, and witnesses reported that the acrid smell of burning fuel permeated the crash scene.

"We had a significant amount of fuel left in the aircraft," said Dave Bissonette, emergency coordinator for the Town of Clarence. "It was a hazmat situation."

Tony Tatro, 35, who lives on Goodrich Road, was driving east on Clarence Center Road just before the crash.

He saw the plane, just above him, heading north, which seemed to be in the exact opposite direction it should have been heading.

"It was [flying] nose down, hardly above the treetops, and its left wing was tilted slightly down," Tatro said. "I did not see any landing gear. I saw the underbelly of the plane fairly well. There was nothing burning on the plane and no physical damage. Nothing seemed wrong, except it was on a bad path."

The sound of the plane was labored and unusually loud just before the crash.

Tatro didn't see the crash, but he had no trouble hearing it, even with his car windows closed.

What did he think about the chance of there being any survivors?

"No chance," Tatro replied. "It was a bad, bad impact. It was hot, and the explosion was massive. I couldn't see anyone



Bill Wippert/Bufalo News

Residents living near the plane crash site on Long Street in Clarence Center are escorted from their homes to a safer area by authorities Thursday night.

surviving it."

Chris Kausner, of Clarence, whose sister Ellyce was aboard the flight, told The Buffalo News that after he heard about the crash, he called another sister who had gone to pick her up at the airport to see if her plane had landed.

"She said that they told them the plane had landed and was taxiing, but that was not the case," he said.

Kausner said Ellyce was a law student at Florida Coastal University in Jacksonville and was coming home to visit.

In Washington, the National Transportation Safety Board announced that it will be sending a team to Buffalo this morning to investigate the crash.

Lorenda Ward will serve as chief investigator. She has investigated several other plane crashes during her tenure at the agency — including the fall 2007 crash that claimed the life of New York Yankees pitcher Corey Lidle.

Safety Board Commissioner Steven Chealander and public

affairs officer Keith Holloway will accompany Ward to Buffalo. While the agency's investigations usually take months to complete, the agency said it would hold a news conference to discuss the accident in the Buffalo area today.

The crash is America's deadliest since a Comair commuter jet crashed in Lexington, Ky., on Aug. 27, 2006. That crash also claimed 49 lives.

David Luce, who lives about 150 yards from the crash scene, on Goodrich Road, said he wasn't surprised to learn that there were so many deaths.

"I can't imagine that anyone survived it," he said. "If you heard that explosion, and you saw how fast the whole area was on fire, it was pretty clear that it was jet fuel burning."

"I would guess that everything disintegrated on impact," he added.

Just before the crash, Luce heard the plane and noticed that it sounded a little funny.

"It sounded quite loud, and then the sound stopped," Luce

said. "Then one or two seconds later, there was a thunderous explosion. I thought something hit our house. It shook our whole house."

"There was the initial boom, and then these cannon shots — these loud secondary explosions, and they went on for about 10 minutes."

Within 5 to 10 seconds, Luce said, he saw flames 40 or 50 feet high.

One or two minutes after the crash, Luce had walked to a spot that gave him a clearer view of the scene.

"The house was already flattened. There was no house, just a pile of rubble and still burning."

Luce said he heard screams following the crash, but he doesn't know whether they came from injured people or from neighbors.

Almost two hours after the crash, Luce said he still saw flames shooting from the crash site, but they were not as high as before.

Buffalo News Staff Photographer Harry Scull Jr., who lives in Clarence, said he heard a fire alarm at 10:20 p.m.

"Thirty seconds later, the phone rang, and I knew it was something big," he said. "It was my neighbor. He said a plane hit a house, look out your window. I'm two miles from there, and it was a ball of fire."

Scull said he went to Long Street to take pictures and found a chaotic scene as firefighters attempted to run hoses to fight the flames.

Scull noted that after dark, he has noticed that incoming flights pass lower overhead.

"It scares you, they come in so low," Scull said. "You can smell the jet fuel burning. I knew it was just a matter of time."

e-mail: News Staff Reporters T.J. Pignataro, Harold McNeil, Sharon Linstedt, and Staff Photographers Harry Scull Jr. and Bill Wippert contributed to this report.

Psychiatrist suggests avoiding newscasts and staying positive

GLOOM • from A1

• Gasoline prices creeping up again after receding from record highs.

"There's a lot of bad news," said Brian D. Barnas, a University at Buffalo student. "That's the times we're in right now. That's what's going on in the world."

As a result, many Americans are facing fear, anxiety, uncertainty and stress.

The despair and desperation that come with such feelings is the "modern face of mental illness," said Thomas P. McNulty, president and chief executive officer of the Mental Health Association of Erie County.

Many people have heard of schizophrenia, bipolarity, and eating and personality disorders, McNulty said.

"But today the modern face of mental illness includes mortgage crises, job loss, people stressed to the limit financially. It's an entirely different emotional situation," McNulty said. "The modern-day things we can face can turn into a severe emotional disturbance."

All the doom and gloom makes Julie Quinn, a 28-year-old Amherst resident who is engaged to be married, feel like she's at an impasse.

"All the bad news lately makes me feel like I'm stuck. There's no change. I don't feel change is coming," she said.

The stretch of very cold weather and consistent snow days only adds to the feeling there is no end in sight, McNulty said.

"It makes it difficult to get up in the morning. It makes for longer drives home. It causes problems with schedules because of snow days. You may slip on the sidewalk, or side-walks that aren't cleared block your way," he said. "It just adds to the aggravations."

The news might not get better anytime soon.

President Obama already has warned that the economy will get worse before it gets better. The list of large companies cutting jobs keeps growing. And officially, there's still five weeks of winter left.

"It's the same bad news over and over," said 59-year-old Tom Shilanski, a General Motors retiree who lives in North Tonawanda. "That's the way the country is going. It's crazy."

"I feel bad for the next generation," said Shilanski's wife, Linda, who retired from state government in 2004.

The couple's 38-year-old son was laid off from Newspress. Their 34-year-old son was laid off from Delphi Harrison Thermal Systems. And their daughter, who can't find a job, lives in the house next door, which the Shilanskis own.

"It's sad," she said. "What's going to be there for them?"

Emily Tolnay and Jenna

Murray wonder the same. The young women, both 18, are fashion design majors at Buffalo State College. They said the bad news affects them, too.

"Yeah, our professors are telling us that we should start looking for a job now," said Tolnay, even though they are only freshmen.

"It's a little bit scary right now," Murray said. "It can all start feeling really heavy."

The critical point is that there are certain things people can do to survive tough times, experts say.

"There is no magic potion. There is no magic solution," but there are things people can do "to have a more successful outcome," McNulty said.

"First, reach out because you are not alone. You are not the only one experiencing this. We all got sideswiped and surprised by it," he said.

Take steps before reaching the snapping point, as two California men recently did. One killed his wife, five young children and himself after the couple were fired from their hospital jobs. The other donned a Santa Claus suit and went on a Christmas Eve massacre, killing his ex-wife, eight of her relatives and himself. Recently divorced, the man had been laid off from his six-figure job in the aerospace industry and his ex-wife was awarded spousal support as his debts stacked up.

"The economy, layoffs, gas prices. It's more than people want to hear. It's a lot," said Melissa Stroka, a Canisius College student.

Dr. Judith Orloff agreed. A practicing psychiatrist and professor of psychiatry at UCLA, Orloff said even in the midst of doom and gloom, stay focused. In a phone interview, she also offered tips on what people can do to avoid panic and emotional distress.

For one, stay in the present and don't wander into the future.

"Don't go to worst-case scenarios; that just fuels the fear. Stay focused on what you have to be grateful for," said Orloff, author of books on managing fear, depression and anxiety brought on by economic crises.

Second, don't be addicted to fear.

"Don't keep watching those newscasts. You can be informed, but people are addicted to news on television, then they keep getting this horrible news in their brains over and over," she said.

Also, attract positive people around you, not emotional vampires.

"They can be very negative, and they will bring you down. Instead, have a positive support system to encourage you to do what you can each day to make things better," she said.

e-mail: dswilliams@buffnews.com

\$1.3 billion aimed at special education, underperforming schools

STIMULUS • from A1

in the next two days, goes a long way toward relieving the fiscal burden that the deepening recession has placed on New York and other states.

School district officials had complained that earlier versions of the bill did not do enough to make up for the expected cuts in state aid and their other budget shortfalls, but Schumer said the final version was a dramatic improvement.

"This should cover most, if not all, of the state funding gap this year," Schumer said.

The two-year sum coming to New York for school aid is not only more than three times the size of the proposed cuts in state education funding, but also \$700 million more than what would have gone to the state under the Senate's version of the bill.

The stabilization money first must be used to make up for lost state aid to the schools. Any excess still has to go to the school districts, based on the state's existing formula for school aid, Schumer said.

That is just part of the assistance that New York's schools will receive under the bill. In addition, they will get \$1.3 billion in aid for special education and underperforming schools.

The state can expect a big cash boost, as well, because of the bill's move to dramatically increase the federal share of costs for Medicaid, the federal health program for the poor, from 50 percent to nearly 60 percent.

That will mean \$8.6 billion for New York State over 27 months and an additional \$4 billion for its counties, which share the cost for the state's Medicaid program. That is a 26 percent increase over earlier versions of the bill.

Erie County Executive Chris

Collins previously said a change in the Medicaid formula could relieve the fiscal pressures facing the county, and the final bill shows why. Schumer said the final bill will mean \$113.96 million in savings to Erie County over 27 months, along with \$24.76 million for Niagara County.

"This is going to certainly alleviate many of the pressures the counties and the state have, although it is not going to eliminate them," Schumer said.

Paterson warned state legislators against seeing the temporary federal windfall as an excuse to avoid the tough cuts he has proposed in his 2009-10 budget, which he said are necessary to return the state to long-term fiscal stability.

"It is our responsibility in New York to clean up our own debt," Paterson said.

State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli also urged his former colleagues in the State Legislature not to use the stimulus

as an excuse to push the state's fiscal problems off on the taxpayers of tomorrow.

While providing fiscal relief to the state and its counties, the bill also provides \$1.3 billion to the state for mass transit, \$1 billion for highways and hundreds of millions for sewer and water projects, Schumer said, citing an analysis of the bill by the Government Accountability Office.

At the same time, the final version of the bill includes two major disappointments for the state.

It has no money for higher education construction, even though the state had included \$242 million in projects at the University at Buffalo on its original list of "shovel-ready" stimulus projects.

While a House version of the bill had included \$1.3 billion for school construction in the state, the final bill includes no such funds. Instead, it sets aside \$8.8 billion nationwide, and an un-

determined amount in New York, for renovations of public facilities, including schools.

The breakdown of the state's benefits came as federal lawmakers continued to dicker over the bill's final details — and as Democrats and Republicans continued their war of words over the proposal. The House is expected to vote on the bill today, with Senate action likely Saturday.

President Obama continued his campaign for the legislation Thursday, telling a crowd at a Caterpillar plant in East Peoria, Ill., that with the stimulus bill, companies "may be able to start growing again. Rather than cutting jobs, they may be able to create them again."

But shortly after Obama spoke, Caterpillar Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jim Owens said his company probably will have to lay off more employees before it starts thinking about rehiring. Owens said that even if a stimulus plan passes

immediately, it won't have an effect on the economy until late this year or early 2010.

Owens seemed to back away from Obama's assertion that the Caterpillar executive had promised to rehire some of the laid-off workers if Congress approved the sweeping stimulus bill.

Republicans contended that the bill is far too heavy on government spending and far too light on tax cuts, even though the latter account for about 35 percent of the package.

"This is not the smart approach," said Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. "The taxpayers of today and tomorrow will be left to clean up the mess."

Zremski reported from Washington, and Precious from Albany. News wire services also contributed to this report.

e-mail: jzremski@buffnews.com and tprecious@buffnews.com

THE BUFFALO NEWS

FINAL EDITION Copyright 2009 SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2009 Serving Western New York since 1880 82 PAGES • 50 CENTS

FLIGHT 3407'S TRAGIC CRASH LEAVES A STUNNED COMMUNITY SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS



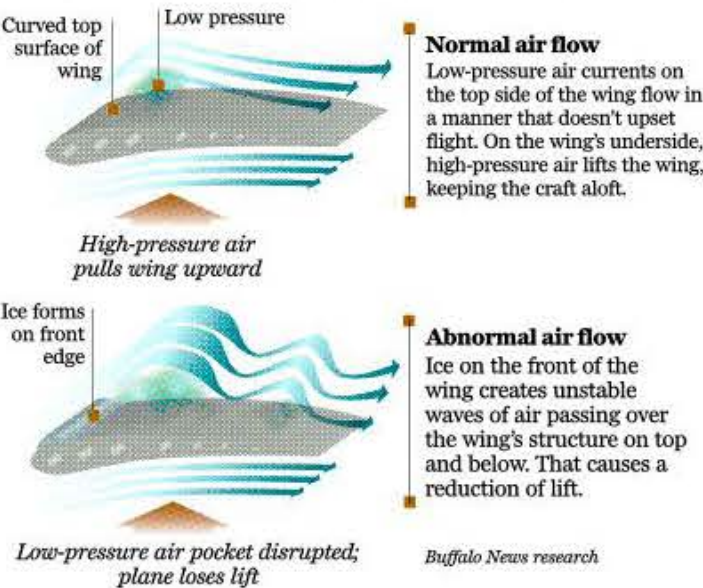
JoAnne McNamara/Special to the Buffalo News

The landing gear of Continental Flight 3407 can be seen in upper left corner of this photo showing the aftermath of Thursday night's fiery crash on Long Street in Clarence Center.

PLUNGE INTO HORROR

Danger from icing

A coating of wing ice as thin as a DVD can reduce the aircraft's ability to fly by 25%. Wing icing disrupts the smooth flow of air.



How events of doomed flight unfolded

By MAKI BECKER, PHIL FAIRBANKS
AND SHARON LINSTEDT
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

The crew of doomed Continental Flight 3407 reported "significant ice build-up" on the aircraft's windshield and leading edges of the wings in the moments before it suddenly plunged into a Clarence Center house Thursday night, killing all 49 aboard and one man on the ground in a hellish fireball, according to the National Transportation Safety Board.

The flight data and in-flight voice recorders, salvaged late Friday morning from the tail of the nearly obliterated plane, were rushed to Washington, D.C., for analysis.

And by 5 p.m., NTSB member Steven Chealander announced that the "black boxes" already were yielding potentially important clues as to what brought down the commuter plane.

Chealander and other aviation experts cautioned against jumping to conclusions and that the investigation was just beginning into the nation's deadliest airplane crash since November 2001.

But the new details about ice and the steep descent of Flight 3407, coupled with information about Thursday night's weather conditions, seemed to suggest ice may be to blame.

"Significant ice buildup is an aerodynamic impediment," Chealander explained. "Airplanes are built with wings that are shaped a certain way, and ice can change the shape."

The NTSB also reported that the black boxes indicated that the Bombardier Dash-8's anti-icing system had been activated. The ice clearing system employs "pneumatic boots," which expand outward to push ice off the wing edges. But there was no indication yet as to whether the system was functioning properly on the plane.

Flight 3407, operated by Colgan Air, a feeder company to Continental, took off at 9:20 p.m. Thursday from Newark Liberty Airport headed for Buffalo Niagara International Airport. It was about two hours behind schedule.

High winds, with gusts as high as 60 mph, had prevented many aircraft from taking off from the New Jersey airport Thursday evening, according to Steve Coleman, a spokesman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which operates the airport.

"We had some significant number of delays because of the winds," he said. "Some were delayed up to five hours."

Piloting the 74-seat turbo prop was Capt. Marvin D. Renslow, 47, of Lutz, Fla., who had joined Colgan Air in September 2005. The first flight officer, Rebecca Lynne Shaw, 24, of Maple Valley, Wash., had joined Colgan Air in January.

See **Crash** on Page A2

Activists, musicians, devoted family members and working people now linked by tragedy

50 lives, some famous, are lost forever

By CHARITY VOGEL
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Some of them were well known.

Like Alison Des Forges, a human rights activist and world-renowned expert on Rwanda, who was coming home from a public debate with a member of British Parliament.

Or two musicians who played with Chuck Mangione's jazz band, Coleman Mellett and Gerry Niewood, who were going to star in a jazz concert Friday night at Kleinhans Music Hall.

Or Beverly Eckert, the widow of a Buffalo-born man killed in the World Trade Center attacks on 9/11, who met President Obama last week. Obama called her "an inspiration."

Others were lesser known, but no less loved.

A devoted father of two, David Borner. A world traveler with family in Buffalo, John G. Roberts III. A woman named Mary Pettys, called "Belle," who got engaged in December and was planning a June wedding.

"Every morning since my mother's



Beverly Eckert, 9/11 widow and activist, had met with President Obama on Feb. 6.



Alison Des Forges, a human rights activist, was returning from a forum.

death, she would go to Tim Hortons, get a coffee for herself and my father, and bring it over to his house, sit there and have coffee," said her brother, Patrick Pettys. "Not a day went by when she missed it. She was a saint."

None of them imagined this would happen, when they stepped on board Continental Connection Flight 3407 in Newark, N.J., bound for Buffalo.

The plane was late getting off the ground. Eckert called her sister from the plane while it idled on the ground, to let her know she would be delayed a

while.

"She said, 'Don't wait up, it looks like it's gonna be late.' But I did wait up," said Karen Eckert, an Amherst resident. "When we realized [it had crashed], we went straight to the airport. It's just unreal."

As the plane approached Buffalo Niagara International Airport at about 10:15 p.m., it abruptly plunged out of the drizzly sky and crashed into the home of a Clarence family of six, taking

See **Victims** on Page A2

INDEX

Business Today C3
City & Region C1
Classified D7
Comics C10
Crossword C11, D16
Entertainment C8
Fingo C8
Lotteries C2
Obituaries C12
Opinion A8
Picture Page C10
Sports D1
Television C7

WEATHER

Some sun, then clouds. High temperature 32, low 19. Details on Page C14.



Sharon Cantillon/Buffalo News

Nancy Scipider holds Valentine's Day balloons as she awaits a bus on Delaware Avenue in North Buffalo.

INSIDE

- EXPERTS HAVE GRIM TASK OF COMBING SITE. PAGE B2
- YEARS OF TRAINING TAKE OVER FOR FIRST RESPONDERS. PAGE B3
- VICTIM PROFILES. PAGES B4-B5
- SAFETY AIDES CHIDE FAA FOR IGNORING WARNINGS. PAGE B8
- PICTURE PAGE. PAGE B10



ON BUFFALONEWS.COM

- AUDIO: THE LAST COMMUNICATION BETWEEN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS AND FLIGHT 3407
- VIDEO: THE SCENE MINUTES AFTER THE CRASH, PLUS EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS
- GRAPHIC: FOLLOW THE PLANE'S FLIGHT PATH FROM NEW JERSEY TO BUFFALO
- PLUS: SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE BUFFALONEWS.COM BLOGS.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

In final seconds, plane experienced violent motions

CRASH • from A1

2008.

The plane was heading north and west toward Buffalo where a wild winter storm with slushy snow and heavy winds had struck, plummeting the abnormally warm temperatures that had enveloped the area Wednesday down to the freezing level by Thursday night.

According to the National Weather Service, the airport temperature was measured at 33 degrees shortly before 10 p.m.

Weather conditions were described as "light snow, fog and mist," with southwest winds of 17 mph and gusts up to 25 mph.

In the last half-hour of the doomed flight, the crew reported visibility was 3 miles and there was snow and mist in the air, the NTSB said. But as the plane descended toward Buffalo, the crew reported "hazy" conditions."

According to conversations recorded between air traffic controllers and Shaw, which were available on the Web sites www.youtube.com and www.liveatc.net, all was normal while the plane was at 2,300 feet and getting ready to position itself for landing.

Aviation experts said it is typical for the first officer to handle radio communications while the pilot steers the plane.

Neither the air traffic controller, nor Shaw, showed any hint of trouble in their voices.

Air Traffic Control: "Colgan 3407, turn left heading 310 (degrees)."

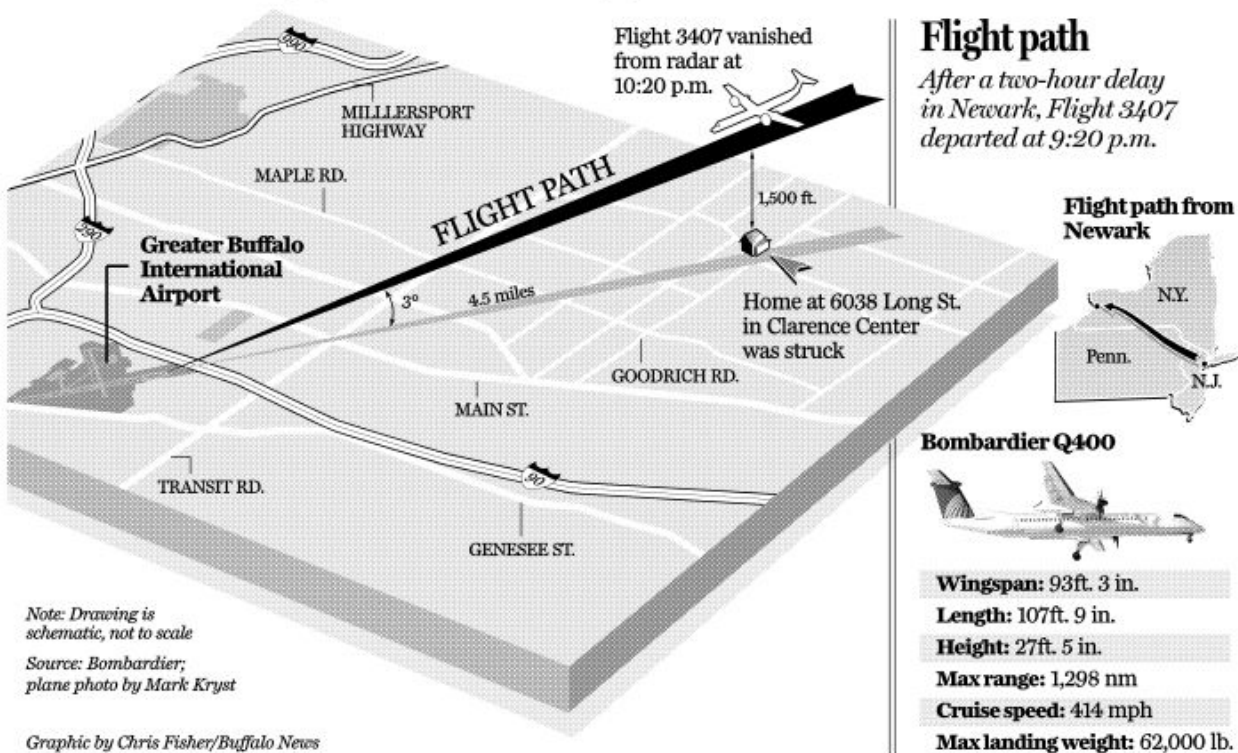
Shaw: "Left heading 310, Colgan 3407."

About 30 seconds later, air traffic control contacted the plane again.

ATC: "Colgan 3407, three miles from Klump (referring to a locator marker located near Roll Road between Shimerville and Thompson roads in Clarence, about 4.5 miles from the airport). Fly heading 260 (degrees), maintain 2,300 (feet) 'til established. Cleared for ILS (instrument landing system). Runway 2-3 approach."

Shaw repeated the directions for getting the plane in place for landing in rapid-fire pace. The exchange was routine protocol, which gives air traffic controllers the chance to catch any mistakes.

About 30 seconds later, another back and forth from the tower to the



plane.

ATC: "Colgan 3407, contact tower 120.5 (radio frequency). Have a good night."

3407: "(garble) Colgan 3407."

Then, just a second or two later, air traffic control tried to contact Flight 3407, likely to let the crew know they were cleared to land.

ATC: "Colgan 3407, approach?"

There was no response.

Five seconds later, he tried again.

ATC: "Colgan 3407, Buffalo."

Nothing.

A sense of urgency seemed to seize the air traffic controller, his voice growing loud and stern.

ATC: "Colgan 3407, approach?"

Silence. The air traffic controller asked another plane in the air for help locating the plane.

ATC: "Delta 1998, look out your left side about five miles for a Dash 8. Should be 2,300 feet. See anything there?"

Delta 1998: "Uh, negative."

The air traffic controller kept trying to reach the missing plane on the radio.

ATC: "Colgan 3407, Buffalo."

Another minute and a half pass.

ATC: "Colgan 3407, Buffalo tower."

How do you hear?"

A supervisor is then heard over the radio.

ATC: "This is ground communication. We need to talk to someone at least five miles northeast, possibly Clarence, that area right in there, Akron area. Either state police or sheriff's department. We need to find out if anything's on the ground. This aircraft was five miles out. All of a sudden we have no response from that aircraft."

A moment later, another voice from air traffic control.

ATC: "All I can tell you is that we had an aircraft over the marker and we're not talking to him now."

Flight 3407 had in fact tumbled from the sky, crashing nearly nose first into a house at 6038 Long St. in Clarence Center.

The black boxes recovered by NTSB investigators indicated that, during its descent, the crew asked air traffic control for permission to drop down to 12,000 feet. It's not clear when this request was made. Moments later, it requested a flight path at 11,000 feet to dodge weather conditions.

The NTSB also said black boxes showed that, a minute before the plane crashed, the landing gear was engaged.

About 20 seconds later, when the plane was at 2,200 feet above sea level, the aircraft experienced "severe pitch and roll," violent sideways and up and down motions, Chealander said Thursday.

The fiery impact, which sent raging flames shooting at least 50 feet up into the air, killed all of the crew and passengers on board, along with Douglas C. Wielinski, 61, who was inside the Long Street house. His wife and daughter survived.

Amazingly, the damage was limited to just the one house, although 12 residences nearby were evacuated as a precaution. NTSB officials said the steep angle of the crash likely helped limit the carnage on the ground.

Within just a couple of minutes of the crash, it was evident from the air traffic control recordings that they suspected weather could be a factor.

Air traffic controllers began quizzing other pilots about the icy conditions over Buffalo.

"Delta 1998, you getting any icing where you're at?" one Buffalo air traffic controller asked.

"We picked it up on the way down," the pilot responds. "I don't think it's building any more here but about

6,500 (feet) down to 3,500 (feet) maybe."

Over the next several minutes, several other pilots chimed in.

"We're picking up ice here for a while," one pilot told the tower at Buffalo Niagara International Airport.

Another reported: "It doesn't appear to be building. We've got about a half-inch, well . . . about a quarter-inch of ice from the descent that has remained with us the whole time."

"We've been picking up rime ice for the last 10 minutes or so," added another pilot heading into Buffalo. Rime ice is an icy glaze caused by freezing water droplets that harden upon impact.

Icing is an especially dangerous condition that pilots face — especially in the winter, according to Bob Miller, who operates Bob Miller Flight Training Inc. at Buffalo-Lancaster airport.

"When you're looking up at clouds, you're looking at microscopic water droplets," he explained. "In the winter-time, they're . . . below freezing but in liquid form. When they impact an object that is below freezing (such as an airplane wing) at that very instant, those liquid water droplets set up in solid form."

Miller emphasized that there's no way to know for certain whether icing caused the crash yet.

But he said there are two possible scenarios: icing of the back wing and icing of the main wings. Both would cause changes to the aerodynamics of an aircraft.

Icing on the rear wing would cause the plane to go off balance.

"The nose would drop very quickly," he said.

Icing of the main wings would cause the plane to stall, he said of the other scenario. In this case, the plane would pitch forward as well.

He said he did not suspect engine failure because there was no communication between the tower and the plane about such an issue.

Miller said whatever happened, it must have happened extremely quickly. "There was no distress call. That is what is so extremely baffling."

Robert J. McCarthy, Dan Herbeck and Steve Watson contributed to this report.
e-mail: mbecker@buffnews.com
pfairbanks@buffnews.com
and slinstedt@buffnews.com

Music lovers, wives-to-be and young people of promise share tragic end

VICTIMS • from A1

the lives of all 49 people on board, as well as one man in the house.

But one fact emerged as names of the victims trickled out in the aftermath: The passengers killed were as varied and multi-faceted as the city they were headed toward.

Here are some of their stories.

Genocide expert

Des Forges, a Human Rights Watch senior adviser, had been on her way home from a London trip to discuss abuses of the Rwandan government with a member of Parliament.

Before she left New York City that afternoon, she said she was not looking forward to taking a small plane to Buffalo in blustery weather.

"But she took it anyway," said her husband, Roger, a University at Buffalo history professor.

Des Forges, 66, was known for her grace, humility and intellectual successes — one of which was a prestigious MacArthur "genius" grant, another a book about the Rwandan genocide. She conducted meetings with famous peace advocates, such as Jimmy Carter and Nelson Mandela.

"She worked day and night to save people's lives," said Helene Kramer, a family friend.

Des Forges and her husband met as Schenectady-area high school students and Model United Nations members. Des Forges was secretary-general. "I felt that she was beautiful in both body and spirit," he said.

Her focus of study, on the lake region of eastern Africa and Rwanda and Burundi, followed her volunteering as a Harvard undergraduate to teach Rwandan refugees. Her Ph.D. dissertation at Yale University, about the Rwandan monarchy, led the nonprofit organization Human Rights Watch to send her with a team to research ethnic tensions and political killings in 1992.

Two years later, war began, just as her report had warned.

"Her expertise was sought again and again and again by national authorities on cases unfolding in their courts of individuals facing deportation, or on trial for alleged involvement in the genocide," said Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, in a statement.

Des Forges' latest trip to London was for a forum discussion with a conservative member of Parliament and focused on international development. She thought afterward that she'd been persuasive, her husband said.

A former adjunct professor at UB, Des Forges came to Buffalo with her husband in 1973.

"She was an advocate for people who could not advocate for themselves," said Kramer. "It's a loss for everyone."

Music was their life

At least three people on board the plane lived for music.

Two of them were lucky enough to play in the band of Chuck Mangione, a popular jazz musician whose hits include the song "Feels So Good." The band was scheduled to play Friday night in Kleinhans; that concert was canceled.

Gerry Niewood, 64, a Rochester native, played saxophone and flute, and had been playing on Mangione's jazz records since he was 14.

Coleman Mellett, of East Brunswick, N.J., played guitar.

"I'm in shock over the horrible, heartbreaking tragedy of the crash of Flight 3407, which took the lives of my dear friends and band members," Mangione said in a statement. "I am grieving and praying with their families and friends."

The other musician aboard the plane was Susan Wehle, cantor at Williamsville's Temple Beth Am for the last seven years.

Wehle, 55, loved music. She even recorded a CD called "Songs of Healing and Hope." At her temple, she was known for the classes she organized to instruct congregants on leading services. She had a degree in acting, and performed with theater companies and conducted



File photo
President Obama shakes hands with Beverly Eckert on Feb. 6 during a meeting with family members of the victims of terror. Eckert died in the crash of Flight 3047 on Thursday.

choirs across the United States, Canada and Israel.

"Her concern for others, her love of the life of the spirit, was infectious," said Rabbi Irwin A. Tanenbaum of Temple Beth Am. "Any who knew Cantor Wehle came under her spell."

Young and promising

Three young women aboard the plane, all of whom died at just 24, will forever serve as heartbreaking reminders of promising futures cut short.

Elyce Kausner was one. Known as "Elly," the Clarence native consistently amazed her family by her achievements — and her potential.

A graduate of Canisius College, where she won an award for being the student with the most potential for the study of law, Kausner was in her second year at Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville.

"She had more life in her than 10 of us," said John Kausner, her father.

Madeline Linn Loftus was also full of spirit. The Parsippany, N.J., resident loved ice hockey with a passion — playing it, watching it, even driving the Zamboni when needed.

Loftus was on her way into Buffalo for a reunion of a team she used to play for: the Buffalo State College women's ice hockey squad.

Rebecca Lynne Shaw had already displayed the drive and discipline needed to succeed in her chosen career — as a pilot.

Shaw, of Maple View, Wash., had decided in high school, where she was an athlete, that she wanted a career aboard airplanes. Besides her career as a co-pilot with Colgan Air, an airline she had joined a year ago, she was a certified flight instructor.

Heading for happiness

A few aboard the plane had their heads full of plans for weddings they were soon to attend — or participate in. Happy occasions, now forever changed.

One woman, 30-year-old Lorin Maurer of Princeton, N.J., was traveling to Buffalo to attend the wedding of her boyfriend's brother. Her boyfriend, Kevin Kuwik, is the son of former Erie County Legislator Edward Kuwik. Maurer worked at Princeton University.

"Belle" Pettys was planning her own June wedding. She had gotten engaged in December — a lovely present, for her 50th birthday.

Pettys, who grew up in West Seneca in a family of 10 kids, worked for many years at Blue-Cross BlueShield of Western New York before taking a job at TriZetto. She loved spending

time with her large family and friends, family members recalled.

A tragic coincidence

In a sad twist, the victim who was killed on the ground was a former co-worker of one of the victims on Flight 3407.

Douglas C. Wielinski, who was killed when the plane crashed into his Long Street home, worked at Henkel Corp. in Buffalo until 2003, according to a Henkel employee.

Passenger Kevin Johnston worked at Henkel and was returning on Flight 3407 from a business trip, the employee told The News. The Buffalo facility was closed Friday in Henkel's honor.

The 9/11 widow

One death in particular resonated across the nation because of its haunting poignancy.

Eckert, who saw her husband, Sean Rooney, die when the south tower of the World Trade Center collapsed on Sept. 11, 2001, was on her way back home to Buffalo, her birthplace, to celebrate a few special events.

She was flying into Buffalo on a high note. Just last week, she had met with President Obama in Washington, for a discussion of the detainee situation in Guantanamo Bay.

The meeting was more public recognition of Eckert's high-profile role as an advocate for victims' families in the wake of her husband's death.

Eckert was impressed with Obama. She saved the napkin from under his drinking glass, as a souvenir, and bragged to friends about it.

"I sat right across from Obama at the meeting," she wrote in an e-mail to some friends, "and although I took a photo of him, I opted not to use the flash on my camera since that would have been rude. So this is a really blurry photo, but you can still tell who it is."

The admiration was mutual. Obama, in turn, was clearly impressed with Eckert — a slight, blonde woman known for her tailored clothes, her love of

home renovation projects and pottery-making, and her unstoppable drive and determination.

Obama called Eckert a "tireless advocate for the families, those whose lives were forever changed on that September day."

"I pray that her family finds peace and comfort in the hard days ahead," the president said during a news conference Friday morning.

Eckert, 57, a resident of Stamford, Conn., was bound for Buffalo in anticipation of two events she always looked forward to: a gathering with her family and Rooney's, in commemoration of what would have been Sean's 58th birthday on Sunday; and a ceremony at Canisius High School in which she was to award a student with a memorial scholarship in honor of her husband, an alumnus of the school.

"She was an extremely intelligent, competent person. When she was faced with what she faced, and saw a reason to do something, she put her many talents toward that," said Karen Eckert of Amherst, Beverly's sister. "But she wanted balance in her life, too. She said, 'Every day is precious.'"

Eckert, a tireless advocate for the families of 9/11 victims in the years following the terrorist attacks, became a national figure and authority on the issue.

Friends were stunned by the idea that Eckert had died in a way that paralleled her husband — a fiery plane crash.

"I think there's great irony," said Pamela Germain, a vice president at Roswell Park Cancer Institute and close friend of Eckert's. "Sean died with thousands; she died with dozens. The unique circumstances under which they both perished — it's a puzzle. I can't pretend I'm reconciled to all this."

News Staff Reporters Peter Simon, Michelle Kearns, Henry Davis, Steve Watson, and other Buffalo News staff members contributed to this report.
e-mail: cvogel@buffnews.com

THE BUFFALO NEWS

BUFFALONEWS.COM

Copyright 2009

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2009

Serving Western New York since 1880

FINAL EDITION

AT THE SCENE: *Buffalo News reporter witnesses "a sense of purpose amid the wreckage."*

Dozens comb scorched site



Derek Gee/Buffalo News

A grim task, methodically executed: Emergency workers in hazmat suits sift through wreckage of Flight 3407, meticulously collecting remains of the 50 victims as well as parts of the commuter craft that went down Thursday night. This aerial photograph was taken Saturday as responders began to organize the overall recovery. A small army of investigators, law enforcement and aviation experts converged on the scene later in the day. The only part of the craft still intact is the tail, to the right of the charred site. Adjacent to the site, tents have been set up to serve as temporary morgues.

2 carriers stopped flights of prop planes in cold weather

Safety expert raps FAA for minimizing icing risks

By JERRY ZREMSKI

NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

WASHINGTON — Two airlines stopped flying turboprop planes in icy climates after deadly crashes similar to the one that claimed 50 lives Thursday in Clarence — and the nation's former top transportation safety official said the lessons of such earlier crashes should have prevented last week's tragedy.

Both American Eagle and Comair ended their cold-weather use of turboprop planes at least partly out of safety concerns. But Colgan Air, the subcontractor that runs Continental Airlines commuter flights like the one that crashed in Clarence, still flies turboprops in February from Newark to Buffalo.

Aviation experts said it is far too soon to blame the Clarence crash on icing, but the National Transportation Safety Board noted that the plane's crew reported significant ice buildup on the plane's wings.

Aviation experts said icing can cause a plane to suddenly lose control — which is why Jim Hall, the safety board's former chairman, said federal regulators should do much more to make sure icing won't bring down more planes.

"What made this crash more than tragic was that it was foreseeable and likely preventable if not for the preference of profit over safety in some of the aviation industry and for the lax oversight of the Federal Aviation Administration in its failure to adequately address known safety risks related to icing," Hall said.

See **Ice** on Page A2

THE CRASH OF FLIGHT 3407



The Mossop family

INSIDE

In memoriam

Beyond the names of a WNY catastrophe. Page A8

Lingering effects

In Clarence, residents are finding ways to cope. Page A9

Improbable survivors

Donn Esmonde says Karen and Jill Wielinski's survival is the miracle of Flight 3407. Page B1

Trying to go on

Heartbroken loved ones face a day that had been filled with joyful plans. Page B1

ON THE WEB

Buffalo News Video:

- Video of the Buffalo State hockey reunion.
- Erie County sheriff's video of the crash scene.

Share your thoughts on the buffalonews.com/blogs. Much more coverage at buffalonews.com/flight3407

INDEX

Books F9
Business Today B9
City & Region B1
Crossword F11, H5
Jingo ... B12, TV Topics
Lottery numbers B2
Obituaries B6
Picture Page A12
Science Page G6
Sports C1
Spotlight F1
Travel F14
Viewpoints G1

WEATHER

Clouds giving way to some sun. High temperature 34, low 17. Details on Page B16.



Charles Lewis/Buffalo News

Sean Troutman of Lackawanna cleans the windshield of his car on a chilly Saturday afternoon.



\$2.00
Newsstand and machine price

Surreal landscape a hive of activity as probe evolves

15 bodies are recovered; some passengers in rear of plane were still strapped in

By LOU MICHEL

NEWS STAFF REPORTER

The blue and white airplane tail leans against a slender pine tree. It is about all that remains recognizable from Flight 3407.

And there is absolutely nothing left of the Wielinski family home where the plane crashed and burned in a fireball Thursday night.

A Buffalo News reporter drove past the site Saturday, struck by the haunting images.

More than 100 investigators and emergency personnel, many dressed from head to foot in white hazmat suits, walk amid blackened ruins of plane and home where 50 people died. A few of the workers unlock the belts that hold some of the dead still in their seats in the rear of the plane's fuselage.

So far, 15 bodies have been recovered, although authorities say it may be four days before all human remains are recovered.

It is at once a stunning and shocking sight to see so many workers gathered in such a confined area, less than a third of an acre, painstakingly searching through the charred rubble.

Other emergency personnel, some in firefighter turnout gear, some in police uniforms protect-

ing the perimeter, and still others in jackets that say "FBI" and "Medical Examiner," all seem to have a coordinated sense of purpose amid the chaos of the wreckage.

No one gets in the way of the others. There seems to be a dutiful, somber camaraderie.

"It will become easier now that we learned how to do this," said Dr. Anthony J. Billittier IV, Erie County's health commissioner.

These workers are performing a task few others have the stomach to do, but they know how much it means to the victims' families that want to be able to lay their loved ones to final rest with dignity.

Emergency vehicles packed with investigative equipment are parked up and down Clarence's Long Street, which isn't a very long street.

Workers encountered a frozen scene Saturday morning, caused in part by all of the water used to douse the fireball Thursday night.

Portable heaters thaw the site, and workers pump water from what had been the basement.

"What's in the basement, it's

See **Scene** on Page A2

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Plane debris pointed away from airport

SCENE • from A1

hard to know at this point," Billittier said. "The cold has been a challenge for us."

But the heat Thursday from the explosive crash was intense.

Flames fed by airplane fuel and natural gas destroyed most of the passenger cabin, and the fiercest impact was experienced in the cockpit.

"The crew was badly burned, but the remains of most were still intact. Toward the rear of the plane, it was in good shape. Some of the people were still sitting with their seat belts on," said a law enforcement official at the scene Saturday.

He shares the grim image not to be morbid, but to make a point that the pilot somehow managed to right the plane from its erratic descent just before the crash.

"If the pilot had only another thousand feet, he might have come out of it," the official said, shaking his head in despair at what can never be changed.

"The fuselage still has the shape of a tube. But toward the front, there's nothing left but twisted metal framing. The way the plane came down, it dropped onto the left rear roof of the house," he says.

The impact was devastating.

"We found a big cast-iron radiator that was thrown from the house and landed on a front lawn across the street," said the official, who asked that his name be withheld. "When the plane crashed, it sent up mud splatters onto the roofs of two nearby houses."

And what he and other workers could not help noticing is that what was left of the plane's fuselage was pointed away from the direction of Buffalo Niagara International Airport in Cheektowaga, an indication of how out of control the plane was in its last seconds of flight.

The scene with so many people joining together to do their jobs, is mesmerizing, a flourishing beehive in the chill of a winter day.

Near the mound of ash and burned debris is a domed tent that is one of the hive's busiest cells.

"What's that?" the law enforcer is asked.

"Oh, that's the temporary morgue," the officer answers, his voice trailing off as he gazes at the tan-colored tent.

There is a great deal of respect among those working here, but it is a difficult task.

And to that, Billittier also shed



Another view of the Long Street crash site taken Saturday by Erie County Executive Chris Collins aboard the Erie County Sheriff's Office helicopter.

some light.

"People who work in the Medical Examiner's office have seen lots of things. Maybe they haven't seen as much of it at one time," he says of the scope of the crash.

The recovered bodies are taken from the tent morgue two at a time and placed into transport vans that are driven with a police escort to the Erie County Medical Examiner's office in Buffalo, where autopsies are performed.

Beginning today, as many as 40 more specially trained mortuary experts from as far away as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands will be assisting.

They bring with them \$2.8 million worth of equipment and supplies, including X-ray machines, masks,

gowns, autopsy tables — in short, anything needed for a portable morgue.

That's because even the victims may provide information to help create a more comprehensive picture of what happened on Flight 3407.

A few streets away on Goodrich Road, 13-year-old Katie Smith says she was about to go to bed when she heard the noise of the plane falling from the sky Thursday night.

"I heard the plane and looked out my bedroom window and heard a pop and saw reddish-orange glow," she said.

Ken Smith, her father, said he also heard the pop and guessed that an airplane engine had blown.

"Then six or seven seconds later, I heard the crash," Smith said.

He and his daughter and other neighbors have given statements to FBI agents combing the neighborhood.

Others, like Marcia Powers and Doug Errick, also recall hearing what they believe was engine trouble.

"It was around 10:20 p.m., and I jumped right up and said to my wife that plane's way too low. There was an inconsistency in the engines. It was an erratic sound. Then I heard the boom and looked out my window and saw a pink glow in the sky," Errick says.

Authorities have said the crew did not report any engine problems but did comment on ice on the plane.

Powers also heard the plane and wondered, at first, if it was a snowplow driving by. But she instantly ruled that

out.

"No, it sounds like an engine flut-tering. Then I heard a boom, and that was when we came outside and saw flames," Powers says. "We went over to Long Street and heard screams. It was horrible. It smelled almost like the smoke you get from burning tires."

Though these folks are only a few blocks from the crash site, it might as well be miles away, because Long Street will remain closed to the outside world for days as the workers methodically untangle the tragedy.

News Staff Reporter Patrick Lakamp contributed to this report.

e-mail: lmichel@buffnews.com

FAA takes issue with criticism; claims better record

ICE • from A1

Neither Pinnacle Airlines, which owns Colgan Air, or Bombardier, the Canadian firm that built the Dash 8 Q400 plane that crashed in Clarence, returned requests for comment for this story.

But Laura Brown, an FAA spokesman, took issue with Hall's comments, saying the FAA has been pushing for improvements to prevent icing accidents for years now.

"And as a result, accidents involving icing have been reduced significantly in the last 15 years," Brown said.

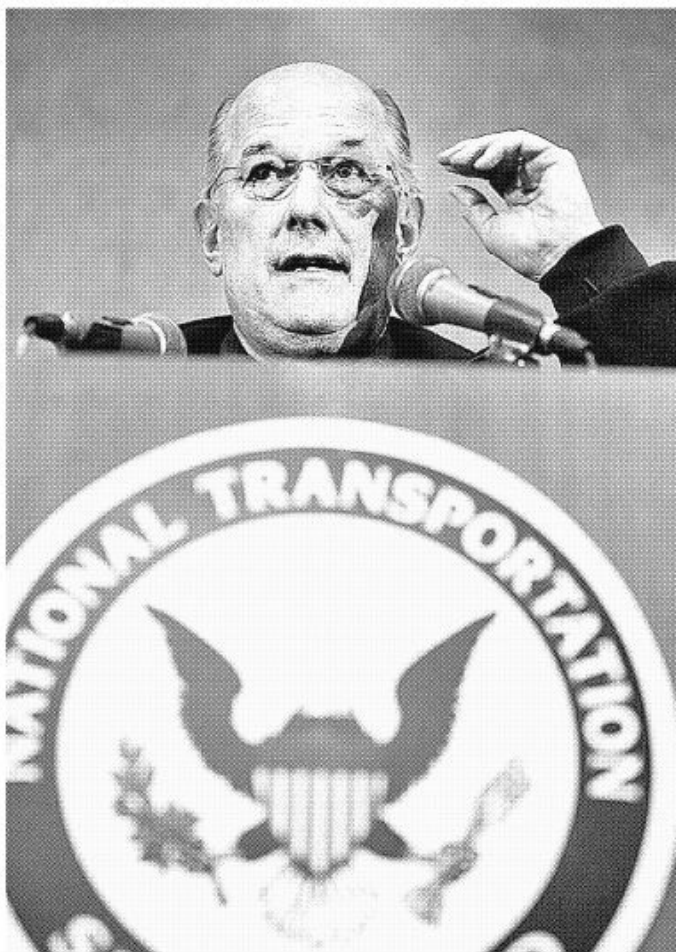
'Caribbean fleet'

Then again, they could have been reduced in part because two of the nation's largest commuter airlines, American Eagle and Comair, stopped flying turboprop planes in cold weather.

After an American Eagle turboprop went down in icy conditions in Indiana in 1994, the airline "really made [turboprops] their Caribbean fleet," said Jim Kreindler, an attorney who represented the families of victims of that Indiana crash, which claimed 68 lives.

American Eagle officials could not be reached to comment, but the National Transportation Safety Board's report on that accident says the plane, en route from Indianapolis to Chicago, lost control because of ice accumulation. The ATR 72-210 turboprop was not equipped to handle icing and plummeted to the ground in Roselawn, Ind.

"The airplane was susceptible to this loss of control, and the crew was unable to recover," the board's report conclud-



Harry Scull Jr./Buffalo News

Steven Chealander of the National Transportation Safety Board speaks at a news conference Saturday in the Buffalo Niagara Marriott in Amherst.

ed.

As for Comair, that airline abandoned turboprops entirely after a Jan. 9, 1997, flight from Cincinnati to Detroit nosedived 18 miles short of the runway, killing all 29 people aboard.

Comair eliminated turboprops from its fleet in the late 1990s because regional commuter jets are simply better aircraft, said Jeff Puth, a company spokesman.

"I'm sure there was a safety element to it," Puth added.

After the Comair crash, the

safety board issued a devastating report that echoed Hall's comments holding the FAA responsible for the Clarence crash.

"The probable cause of this accident was the Federal Aviation Administration's failure to establish adequate aircraft certification standards for flight in icing conditions," said the report, which also blamed the FAA for failing to enforce proper deicing procedures and failing to require the establishment of adequate minimum airspeeds in icy weather.

Hall was chairman of the safety board at the time of both the Indiana and Michigan crashes, but he is by no means alone in warning of the dangers of icing, particularly for turboprop planes.

"Even a small amount of ice buildup can significantly decrease the lift force and increase the drag of an aircraft," said Puneet Singla, Ph.D., assistant professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering at the University at Buffalo.

And the wings of turboprop planes are far more likely to encounter icing problems than jets are, for two reasons.

Turboprops fly at a slower speed, making it easier for ice to accumulate, said Kreindler, the lawyer in the lawsuit that followed the Indiana crash.

In addition, "turboprops spend a much larger percentage of time in those altitudes where icing is likely to occur," said William R. Voss, a former FAA official who now serves as president of the Flight Safety Foundation.

Hall said he is particularly concerned about turboprop planes that are equipped with pneumatic deicing boots, which he, in an op-ed submitted to The Buffalo News, called "a technology invented in the 1930s which has not changed much since."

The heated wing technology that jets use is much more effective in controlling ice, said Hall, who faulted the FAA for consistently ignoring the safety board's recommendations for tighter icing controls on turboprop planes.

"The FAA should ground all aircraft of this type until the NTSB investigation is completed and it is clear they can be operated safely," said Hall, who headed the safety board from 1994 through 2001.

But Brown, of the FAA, said: "I don't think we have any information that would cause us

to ground the aircraft."

Reforms slow

While Hall contended that the new model of the plane that crashed in Buffalo was not adequately tested before it was approved for use, Brown said that model included a modernized deicing system to meet an upcoming upgrade in the FAA's standards.

Despite Brown's contention that the aviation agency has toughened its standards on icing, the safety board says the FAA has ignored the safety board's call for greater icing regulation for 12 years now. And neither Hall nor Steven Chealander, the safety board member who is currently in Buffalo to investigate Thursday's crash, are pleased about it.

"The serious safety risks posed by icing conditions must be addressed for more than just the short term," Hall said. "I hope that this accident will finally cause the FAA and the commercial aviation industry to take these risks seriously so that a tragedy such as this will not happen again."

Meanwhile, at a news conference in Buffalo, Chealander held up a pamphlet that read: "NTSB Most Wanted List Transportation Safety Improvements," which includes several recommendations regarding icing.

"They're recommendations that we feel are being moved too slowly, or for other reasons, we feel needed added emphasis," Chealander said.

For example, the safety board wants to require that airplanes with pneumatic deicing boots activate the devices earlier.

"The process has been to activate the boost system once you recognize that there's ice formed on the wings. We recommend that you maybe turn it on sooner than that," Chealander

said.

At the same time, Chealander stopped far short of Hall's comments, and far short of criticizing the turboprop plane that crashed in Clarence.

"This Dash 8 is a workhorse airplane," he said, stressing that investigators have not yet identified icing as the cause of the Buffalo crash. "It's not real susceptible to ice. It flies in ice all the time. I've talked to some Continental pilots today who fly it. That's not a concern."

Asked about the fact that two airlines have already stopped flying propeller planes in the Northeast due to icing conditions, Chealander wouldn't comment.

"I don't want to get into that, because then you're going to come up with speculation and analyze [this accident]," he said.

News Staff Reporter Brian Meyer contributed to this report.

e-mail: jzremski@buffnews.com.

How to reach us

On the Web: buffalonews.com

Main office	849-3434
Circulation	842-1111
Newsroom	849-4444
Obituaries	849-4449
Death Notice/In Memoriam	856-5555
Niagara County Bureau	283-7487
Business news	849-3492
Opinion	849-4411
Features	849-4470
Weddings/engagements	849-4467
Golden anniversaries	849-4449
Gusto	849-6014
Gusto Calendar	849-4553
Sports	849-4461
Newsroom fax	856-5150
Library	849-4401
Photo Reprints	1-877-619-1277
Reader Hotline	849-6024
Newspaper in Education	849-6143
Advertising	849-3411
Classified	856-5555
Buffalo.com	849-5406

ON BUFFALONEWS.COM
To COMMENT ON THIS STORY, GO TO THE INSIDE THE NEWS BLOG.

THE TRAGEDY OF FLIGHT 3407

In memoriam / Beyond the names of a Western New York catastrophe

DONNA PRISCO, a married mother of four from Randolph, N.J., had been a flight attendant for less than a year. She had attended training with Matilda Quintero, a good friend who was also working the flight.

Prisco, 52, had been a stay-at-home mother for 27 years before she fulfilled a lifelong dream of becoming a flight attendant, her sister Karen Prisco, of Sparta, told the Star-Ledger. On her first day of work in June, she proudly posed for a photo in her living room.



"She wanted to go back to work and do something for herself," Karen Prisco told the newspaper. "She said, 'I'd do this job for free.' She just loved it. She was a people person."

Prisco's 24-year-old daughter, Ashley, also works for Colgan Air, the company that operated Flight 3407. Prisco also had three sons, Neil Prisco III, 27; Brett Prisco, 22; and Corey Prisco, 15, and was married to Neil Prisco Jr.

— Associated Press

Retired U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. **JOHN J. FIORE** saw three wars before retiring to civilian life.

Fiore, 60, a Niagara Falls native, was on Flight 3407 on his way back from a vacation, said a friend, Duane Frost.

"All the sacrifices that he's done for the country and for this to happen to him and have his life cut short is just mind-boggling," said Frost, a fellow veteran. "He got cheated."

Fiore started his military career in Vietnam with the Marines.

He later joined the Air Force Reserves and served as an air transportation manager with the 30th Aerial Port Squadron of the 914th Mission Support Group.

In an August 2006 article in the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station publication "Niagara Frontiersman," Fiore described the squadron's work in the war on terror as "making history."

"The airlift missions we scheduled moved more than 700 officials in support of the first free Iraqi elections since 1953," Fiore told the 914th Airlift Wing public affairs office in 2006.

Fiore served as an airlift scheduler at the Air Mobility Division, Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, during the tour, which began in 2004, according to the "Niagara Frontiersman."

Fiore lived on Grand Island, Frost said.

He was also an active volunteer at John J. Welch Post 381, American Legion, in Niagara Falls and several other veterans organizations.

— Denise Jewell Gee

BRAD S. GREEN, 53, of East Amherst was a salesman for Kraft Foods, according to former neighbors.

Green and his family were described as kind and helpful, the type of people everyone would want living next door, said Dave Braunscheidel, a former neighbor.

Braunscheidel and Green used to help each other with projects around their houses, like working on Green's hot tub and an engine on his son's three-wheeler.

Green, a member of Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church in Clarence, is survived by his wife, Sharon, and two children, Jennifer and Brad Jr.

"Our heart goes out to them," said Braunscheidel, who said he was neighbor to the Greens for about 10 years.

George Regan, another former neighbor, described Green as "very, very well-liked."

Regan, 88, said the family used to help him use the Internet to keep in touch with his own son, who traveled around the world.

"Anybody that knew them, they're going to be astounded," Regan said.

Green was one of two Kraft employees on the plane, along with David M. Borner of Pendleton.

"We are devastated by the news, and our most heartfelt thoughts and prayers are with our employees' families during this difficult time," the company said in a statement issued to the Tonawanda News. "Kraft Foods also extends its deepest condolences to all families affected by this tragic event."

— Aaron Besecker

KEVIN W. JOHNSTON, 52, of East Amherst, was director of safety, health and environment at Henkel Technologies-Americas in Buffalo.

In an in-house message sent Friday, company executives alerted employees about the loss of Johnston, as well as Douglas Wielinski, a former employee who was in the Clarence Center home where Continental Flight 3407 crashed.

"Our sympathies go out to both families and the many friends Kevin and Doug had at Henkel," they wrote. "This tragedy has affected us all."

Johnston leaves his wife, Kathleen, and daughters, Melissa, Amanda and Kelsey.

Johnston, a certified safety professional and certified industrial hygienist, was past president of the Western New York Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association.

Henkel closed its operations in Buffalo on Friday in remembrance.

Johnston was formerly the corporate manager of industrial hygiene at Pratt & Lambert.

— Aaron Besecker



Donald and Dawn Mossop and their son Shawn, above, were headed to Toronto with Dawn's sister, Ferris Reid, inset.

OUTGOING, LOVING, DOWN TO EARTH

That's how Donald and Dawn Mossop, their son Shawn and Dawn's sister, Ferris Reid, were recalled by a church leader Saturday.

The extended family, who lived together in Bloomfield, N.J., were bound for Toronto but wanted to save money by flying into Buffalo and then driving a rental car across the border.

"It will be a huge loss," said Brett Jackson, coordinator of the body of elders at Jehovah's Witnesses Congregation in Claremont, N.J., where Donald Mossop was an elder. "Not just because of the things Donald oversaw, but also just the presence of he and his family."

"Warm, vivacious — you knew that when you were around them you were going to enjoy yourself."

Both Mossops and Reid were born in Jamaica before making lives for themselves in New Jersey.

Donald Mossop moved to Claremont as a teenager to live with an uncle after the death of his father.

Dawn, a childhood friend, followed

five years later to marry him. Several of her family members, including Ferris Reid, followed.

Donald Mossop, 42, worked for Xerox as a technician repairing copying equipment in Manhattan. He loved to

tinker around and repair things for family and friends.

Dawn Mossop, 48, a senior administrative assistant at pharmaceutical company Schering-Plough, was described by Jackson as "outgoing."

Reid, 44, worked as a traveling nurse and lived with the Mossops in their three-story house with another sister, Venita Reid. Jackson said she

could be quiet in public, but quite the opposite around family and friends.

One of Reid's favorite things was to go shopping with her sisters.

Shawn, 12, a sixth-grader, was a "very respectful, polite child," Jackson said. He was learning to play guitar.

The family enjoyed traveling but rarely went to cold climates. They were going to Canada in the winter-time to meet a love interest of another of Dawn's sisters, Jackson said.

The trip was originally scheduled to occur several weeks ago.

— Mark Sommer

RONALD and LINDA DAVIDSON of Westfield were on their way home from visiting a relative.

Mrs. Davidson, 61, was a longtime nurse at Westfield Memorial Hospital in northern Chautauqua County. Mr. Davidson, 66, was a volunteer at the community kitchen at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Westfield.

The couple has three children: two sons, Andrew and Aaron, and a daughter, Carrie, according to Westfield residents who knew them said.

JENNIFER NEILL, 34, was pregnant with her first child.

"She was due at the end of May," said her mother, Mary Neill.

Her fiancé, Todd Eacker, a physician's assistant, was in Florida visiting his sister when the plane went down.

The last time he spoke with Neill was while she was at the Newark airport waiting for the plane to depart, her father, James, said.

A pharmaceutical sales representative for Shearing-Plough for the past several years, Jennifer left Wednesday morning for New York City for a business trip and was on her way back home on Flight 3407.

Considering she was expecting, her mother wondered about her making the trip.

"I was kind of surprised [her boss] selected her because she was pregnant," said Mary Neill, a teacher in Buffalo Public Schools, who found out about the plane crash while on her way to work Friday morning.

Jennifer lived with her parents in Clarence.

She and her husband did not see the news the night before, and when Jennifer didn't come home Thursday night, they just assumed she was at her fiancé's place.

And because Jennifer always drove herself to the airport, no one was there to meet her.

"The happy part is that she was a very happy and upbeat person," Mary Neill said.

"She is just a wonderful daughter ... She is a very ambitious and a very bright girl," James said, still speaking of his daughter in the present tense two days after the plane crash.

In addition to her parents and fiancé, Jennifer is survived by two brothers, Brendan and Patrick, a major in the Air Force, who was a safety officer and flew commercially at one time, James Neill said.

— Deidre Williams

DARREN TOLSMA wasn't supposed to be on Flight 3407. He was booked to fly out of Newark Liberty Airport on a later plane.

"He took an earlier flight because he wanted to be home so he could say good night to his kids," said Tolsma's wife, Robin. "That tells you how much he was devoted to them."

Nikki, 16, and Darren, 19, were the apples of their father's eye.

"The best way I could say it is he lived his life for his kids. He was so proud of them," said Robin Tolsma, an English teacher at Lancaster Middle School. "His favorite place to be was at Lancaster High School, watching his kids do anything in track or field hockey."

Runners wore black arm-bands in his memory Saturday at a track meet.

One of Darren Tolsma's favorite things to do was to take late-night walks with his son, which could go on for an hour or more.

"They would talk about college, and all the things they could talk about without mom. My son was so sad thinking he would never have those walks again," Robin Tolsma said.

Darren Tolsma worked for 25 years as a defense engineer at Northrop Grumman Amherst Systems. His co-workers were his "second family," his wife said.

He was also proud of their two-story home in Lancaster — especially his manicured lawn.

"He used to Google his own house so he could see how nice it looked from space. He was proud of that lawn," Robin Tolsma said.

A memorial service will be held at 10 a.m. Friday in Lancaster High School, 1 Forton Drive.

— Mark Sommer

MARY JULIA ABRAHAM, 44, was an employee of Invacare Corp. and a retired member of the Army Reserve. She rose to the rank of first sergeant. She also was a greyhound rescuer.

Editor's Note: THESE PROFILES REPRESENT THE INFORMATION THE NEWS WAS ABLE TO OBTAIN BY PRESSTIME. PROFILES OF OTHER VICTIMS OF THE CRASH WILL BE PUBLISHED IN FUTURE EDITIONS.

THE TRAGEDY
OF FLIGHT 3407

VICTIMS OF AN AIR DISASTER

The following people are confirmed victims of the Flight 3407 crash Thursday in Clarence. A complete list of the 49 people on the flight from Newark, N.J., to Buffalo has not been released by the airline or by authorities. These names have come from a variety of sources, including friends and family.

MARY JULIA ABRAHAM, 44 • GEORGE ABU-KAREM, 27, TIBERIAS, ISRAEL • DAVID M. BORNER, 49, PENDLETON • LINDA DAVIDSON, 61, WESTFIELD •
RONALD DAVIDSON, 66, WESTFIELD • ALISON L. DES FORGES, 66, BUFFALO • BEVERLY ECKERT, 57, STAMFORD, CONN. • JOHN FIORE, 60, GRAND ISLAND • BRAD GREEN, 53,
AMHERST • RON GONZALEZ, 44, NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. • ZHAOFANG GUO, 53, AMHERST • KEVIN JOHNSTON, 52, EAST AMHERST • STEVE JOHNSON, NORTHROP GRUMMAN •
ELLYCE KAUSNER, 24, CLARENCE • NICOLE KORCZYKOWSKI, NEW YORK CITY • JEROME KRASUSKI, 53, CHEEKTOWAGA • BETHANY KUSHNER, 19, ANGOLA • MADELINE LOFTUS, 24,
PARSIPPANY, N.J. • LORIN MAURER, 30, PRINCETON, N.J. • COLEMAN MELLETT, 34, EAST BRUNSWICK, N.J. • DON MCDONALD, 48, FORT ERIE, ONT. • DAWN MOSSOP, 48, BLOOMFIELD, N.J. •
DONALD MOSSOP, 42, BLOOMFIELD, N.J. • SHAWN MOSSOP, 12, BLOOMFIELD, N.J. • JENNIFER NEILL, 34, CLARENCE • GERRY NIEWOOD, 64, GLEN RIDGE, N.J. • MARY "BELLE" PETTYS, 50,
WEST SENECA • DONNA PRISCO, 52, RANDOLPH, N.J. • MATILDA QUINTERO, 57, WOODBRIDGE, N.J. • FERRIS REID, 44, BLOOMFIELD, N.J. • CAPT. MARVIN RENSLOW, 47, LUTZ, FLA. •
JOHN ROBERTS III, 48, INDIA • REBECCA SHAW, 24, MAPLE VIEW, WASH. • JEAN SRNECZ, 59, CLINTON, N.J. • DARREN TOLSMA, 45, LANCASTER • SUSAN WEHLE, 55, AMHERST •
ERNEST WEST, 54, CLARENCE • DOUGLAS C. WIELINSKI, 61, CLARENCE • CLAY YARBER, 62, RIVERSIDE, CALIF. • CAPT. JOSEPH ZUFFOLETTO, 27, JAMESTOWN



Harry Scull Jr./Buffalo News

Law enforcement officials keep Clarence Center Road closed on Saturday while more than 100 federal investigators and other authorities continued to work at the crash site on Long Road.

Residents try to cope amid tragedy

Those evacuated allowed to retrieve medication and other items

By JANE KWIATKOWSKI,
LOU MICHEL AND BRIAN MEYER

NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

As the eyes of the nation remain on the Clarence Center site where Flight 3407 went down, the town's residents tried to get on with their lives Saturday — but it wasn't easy, especially since at least four of the 50 victims were Clarence residents.

Steps were being taken to let families who were evacuated near the site of Thursday night's crash into their homes to recover personal belongings, medications and other items. It will be at least a couple more days before they're allowed to permanently return. About a dozen properties were evacuated near the Long Street site immediately after the tragedy occurred. Residents are being escorted into the neighborhood by Erie County sheriff's deputies, but they have to make appointments to do so, said David Bissonette, Clarence's emergency services coordinator.

While the parking lot at Dash's on Main Street was full like most Saturdays, and traffic on Transit Road was thick, many of the effects of the disaster lingered.

Over at the high school on Main Street, members of the Lions Club were setting up for their annual pancake breakfast today, while a pocket of students reflected on the disaster they described as "surreal." "Between the burning plane, the jet fuel, the house and the woods around it, the smell is all over. It's a mixture of a gas station and a campfire," said Jake Brinkman, a junior at Clarence High, where the flag flew at half-staff Saturday.

"I liked the quote President Obama said: 'It makes you realize the fragility of life,'" said Brinkman. "He's completely right."

His friend, Ryan Mutton, said he was trying to move on. "You can't get so wrapped up in it that you don't want to do life," he said. "I woke up. I thought about it a bit. I checked the news to see if anything else had happened lately, and I came to school because we have work to do."

On nearby Old Goodrich Road, Gary and Karen Wright were joined by Pat Burkard, who lives on Long Street.

"Even though I'm out there doing the



Harry Scull Jr./Buffalo News

From left, Clarence high school students Justin Kozlowski, Jake Brinkman, Ally Sebian, Ryan Mutton and her brother Colin Mutton share thoughts about crash.

things I do everyday, I'll stop in my car and turn the radio off and I'll just say a prayer or whatever," said Karen Wright, a Clarence school district employee.

Burkard said she was watching "Grey's Anatomy" at the time of the crash.

"It's like a twilight zone," said Burkard, who lives 10 houses from the crash site. "No one can come in, so there are no cars. There's not any people around. It's just quiet."

"A neighbor came screaming out of her house with a baby in her arms," Burkard recalled. "She kept saying her sister was down the street. I took the baby, and she kept running. Within minutes, her husband followed and got the baby. Her sister was all right, although the tail of the plane landed within feet of her side door."

"I couldn't sleep, so I got my little book to do a puzzle, and I listened to the radio all night on my headphones," she said. "At 3 o'clock, somebody knocked on the door, asking if we were OK and if we had seen what direction the plane was flying from."

As Long Street remains off limit, authorities say curiosity seekers were going so far as to follow the woods beside Ransom Creek, which flows behind the crash scene, in the hopes of viewing the scene.

To prevent that, police have set up 24-hour posts, according to State Police Capt. Steven A. Nigrelli.

One individual was charged Friday with trespassing by state police. A Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority police officer working the perimeter later charged a second individual with disorderly conduct.

Paul R. Brenton, 63, of Clarence Center Road allegedly entered the restricted area and refused to leave. He had to be physically restrained after threatening Officer Karen Skipper, police said. Brenton is scheduled to appear in Clarence Town Court on Feb. 23.

Trooper Troy Bullard arrested Thomas Woodman, 19, of Lakestone Court, Clarence, for trespassing. Bullard found Woodman hiding behind a house on Long Street allegedly videotaping the scene.

The Clarence residents known to have died in the crash are: Ellyce Kausner, 24; Jennifer Neil, 34; Ernest West, 54; and Douglas C. Wielinski, 61.

e-mail: jkwiatkowski@buffnews.com
lmichel@buffnews.com
and bmeyer@buffnews.com

Red Cross to open
center for evacuees

The Greater Buffalo Chapter of the American Red Cross will open an assistance center for families evacuated because of the crash from noon to 6 p.m. today and Monday in the Clarence Senior Center, 4600 Thompson Road.

An adult member of the family must provide photo ID listing current address to receive services.

Members of Facebook are banding together to try to convince the ABC television show "Extreme Home Makeover" to come to Clarence and build the Wielinski family a new home.

The Wielinskis' home at 6038 Long St. in Clarence Center was destroyed when Continental Flight 3047 crashed into it Thursday night.

Homeowner Douglas C. Wielinski died in the crash and fire. His wife, Karen, and daughter, Jill, survived. The Wielinskis have three other daughters.

News of the crash has generated sympathy around the world and online.

Two girls identified as students at Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart started the Facebook group, "Let's Get Extreme Makeover to Build the Wielinski Family a New Home."

The group had more than 2,800 members at one point Saturday evening, with more joining every minute and many offering their enthusiastic help.

The organizers put up a mailing address and links to Web sites for people interested in lobbying the show's producers.

Steven Chealander of the National Transportation Safety Board said that after speaking with some relatives of crash victims he realizes that some may think the response effort is going "painstakingly slow."

"Unfortunately, we're not like... a CSI show on television, where we can solve it all in one hour. This is a long process."

He estimated it will take three or four days to recover all the victims.

The process was slowed a bit on Saturday after ice formed.

The stretch of Goodrich Road near the crash scene that had been closed was expected to reopen in both directions at 6 a.m. today, Erie County Sheriff Timothy B. Howard said.

"It's not an invitation to the public for sightseers," Howard said.

Motorists will not be allowed to park their vehicles on the shoulder of the road, he said.

Long Street and connecting roads near the crash site will remain closed, he said.

A community prayer service will be offered at 11 a.m. Monday in Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church, 8445 Greiner Road, Clarence.

Clarence Community & Schools Federal Credit Union has set up a fund for the Wielinski family, which lost its home

and belongings in the crash of Flight 3407. Douglas Wielinski was killed but his wife, Karen, and daughter, Jill, managed to escape with only minor injuries.

Donations can be made payable to CCSFCU and mailed to 9145 Sheridan Drive, Clarence, NY 14031.

Crisis Services has a 24-hour support hotline for people dealing with the impact of the crash of Flight 3407.

The organization has trained trauma counselors available for those having difficulty dealing with the accident. Staff is also available 24 hours a day to respond to homes, hospitals or other locations for crisis intervention and debriefing support.

Anyone can contact Crisis Services' 24-hour hotline at 834-3131 for support and immediate linkage to its trauma response program.

A crisis information briefing for Clarence residents will get under way at 1 p.m. today in the auditorium of Clarence High School, 9625 Main St. Issues to be addressed include property access, health concerns and stress-management awareness.

Clarence residents have raised questions about environmental issues — with the smell of the burning plane and fuel still thick in the air.

"We did preliminary looks at groundwater runoff and air quality. We do not have any exposures outside of the norm at this point," said David Bissonette, Clarence's emergency services coordinator.

He encourages residents who have any questions to call town officials at 741-8930.

Rep. Louise Slaughter, D-Fairport, on Saturday visited the command center in Cheektowaga, where dozens of emergency services officials continue to oversee the massive response effort. She toured the facility and met with numerous officials, including County Executive Chris Collins.

Slaughter wouldn't disclose whether she planned on meeting with any families of the crash victims, citing the importance of protecting their privacy. But she said her visit to the command center affirmed her belief that emergency responders across the state do "extraordinary work."

"They really put their lives at risk to save ours," Slaughter told reporters. "I wanted to be here today to express my great pride in what they do and to certainly offer them any help."

A Kaisertown funeral home is opening its doors Thursday to give the public an opportunity to remember the families of the victims of Flight 3407.

The public is invited to Mason-Sittnewski Funeral Home, 154 Weimer St., from noon to 8 p.m. Thursday. A grief counselor will be available, said Kevin M. Mason, who owns the funeral home.

e-mail: citydesk@buffnews.com

CITY & REGION

Stanley Evans, Deputy Managing Editor
849-4444 • sevans@buffnews.com

THE BUFFALO NEWS

Sunday, February 15, 2009



Donn Esmonde

COMMENTARY

Survival becomes a miracle

It is the miracle of Flight 3407. There is no other way to put it. Amidst the carnage, out of the wreckage, emerged two improbable survivors of catastrophe: Karen Wielinski and her daughter, Jill.

Look at aerial photos of the blackened ground where Thursday night the Bombardier Dash 8 crashed into the house in Clarence Center. You cannot tell that a house ever existed there. All you can see is the tail section of the plane, charred earth and scattered bits of wood. Yet of the three people in the house when the plane struck, only Doug Wielinski did not survive. His wife and his daughter got out, with little more than scratches.

I cannot believe it. You cannot believe it. DeAnna Hill cannot believe it.

And DeAnna Hill was there. She lives with her husband, Bruce, and two kids a block from where the plane went down. They were at the scene a minute after hearing the impact. Hill was staring at the fireball, stunned, when a woman standing behind her screamed, "That's my house."

If there is one ray of light in this dark night, it is whatever act of God or fate or fortune that spared Karen and Jill Wielinski.

DeAnna Hill figured that the woman and her daughter, who had fallen to the ground, returned home to see the house in flames. They seemed shaken, but not bloody, burned or bruised. The possibility that the two had

emerged from the inferno did not enter Hill's mind.

"Not for a second did I think they had escaped from that fire," Hill said. "In my mind, nobody could have gotten out of that house. There was no house. It was just a flaming airplane."

Hill is 32, a nursing student with short, dark hair and a neighborly charm. She is not particularly religious, but what she saw Thursday night seems beyond logical explanation.

"I don't believe in miracles, but this was like a miracle," Hill told me Saturday afternoon. "There was definitely something [inexplicable] that helped them through that. There was no way anyone could have gotten out of there."

We do not have to imagine it. We have seen for ourselves. The scene and Hill's "Oh my God" utterance were captured on a neighbor's cell phone video, and since played countless times on TV news footage.

This is no feel-good story. It is hard to talk about silver linings to this dark cloud, not when the cloud involves 50 lives obliterated — and hundreds of grieving sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, friends and loved ones.

But if there is one ray of light in this dark night, it is whatever act of God or fate or fortune that spared Karen and Jill Wielinski. Doug Wielinski — a husband and father — is gone. The house is destroyed, with every scrap of clothing and possession it contained. But, astoundingly, two people were spared.

What happened at 6038 Long St. is the local equivalent of the two cops at the World Trade Center, rescued from the rubble hours after the towers fell atop them. The larger story is grim. The smaller picture gives us something to cling to, to be grateful for, amidst the grief and devastation.

There must have been a few seconds between the instant of impact and the plane exploding. That is the only apparent explanation for the survival of mother and daughter. Hill and others say there were a series of explosions in the moments after the crash. Karen Wielinski told WBEN radio that the ceiling came down on her, and she crawled outside to find her daughter standing there.

DeAnna Hill has not slept much since the night of the crash. She keeps hearing Karen Wielinski screaming, "Someone help my daughter." She keeps seeing Jill Wielinski, wrapped in her mother's arms, then collapsing in shock. It all seems surreal, unbelievable. Like a scene from a movie. Like a piece of a miracle.

e-mail: desmonde@buffnews.com

State's stimulus share close to \$25 billion

2-year aid will boost schools and projects

By TOM PRECIOUS

NEWS ALBANY BUREAU

ALBANY — New York's share of the new federal stimulus package will reach nearly \$25 billion over the next two years, a considerable boost to help erase some of the state's worsening deficit that threatens education, health care and other programs.

"This will be a huge stimulus, not only for the physical structures of our state government, but also to the belief that we can emerge from this economic crisis," Gov. David A. Paterson said Saturday.

The clearest winner will be the state's public schools, which were facing \$700 million in operating aid cuts under the governor's 2009 deficit-ridden budget.

Now, that amount — and possibly then some — will be made up with the federal bailout. That will also put

less pressure on local property taxpayers to make up the difference in what had been looming lost state aid.

But the governor still sounded a cautionary note, arguing that the money flow is only temporary and still does not relieve soaring deficits his administration is projecting years into the future.

"We're spending more than we have in revenue. That's our biggest problem. If we address that, then the stimulus package becomes a plus," he said Saturday afternoon in a confer-

ence call with reporters.

"If we use it as replacement money," he added, "then it becomes the same deleterious function that we have suffered for a number of years where we put our problems off into the future and compounded them."

Still uncertain — in part because of the different federal rules attached to the spending — is how much the package will reduce the upcoming 2009 deficit, now projected to reach

See **Stimulus** on Page B2

Heartbroken loved ones face with sorrow a day that had been filled with joyful plans



James P. McCoy/Buffalo News

James Junior leads grieving members of Maddy Loftus' college ice hockey team in prayer in the Buffalo State College Ice Arena on Saturday.

Trying to go on without them

By MAKI BECKER
AND STEVEN T. WATSON

NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

Maddy Loftus was supposed to hit the ice at Buffalo State College at an alumni reunion hockey game and grab food with friends at Pano's and the Anchor Bar, two favorite Buffalo haunts from her college days.

Lorin Maurer was supposed to be at her boyfriend's side as his brother got married at St. Louis Catholic Church in downtown Buffalo.

Beverly Eckert was supposed to present a scholarship to a Canisius High School student with a scholarship in honor of her late husband who was killed in the Sept. 11 terror attacks, meet with her fellow alumni at Sacred Heart Academy



James P. McCoy/Buffalo News

A Bengals hockey jersey bearing Maddy Loftus' No. 10 hangs behind the bench during Saturday's alumni game.

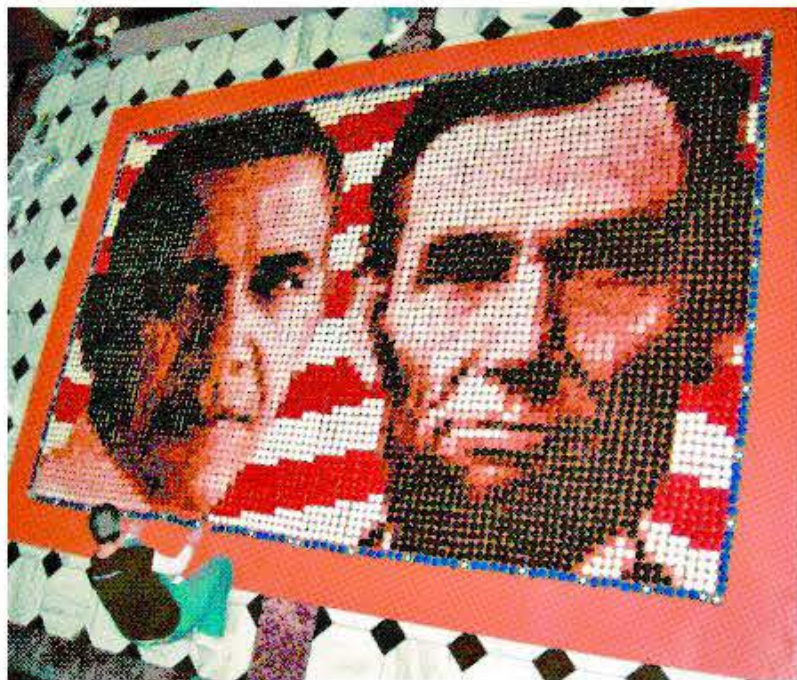
to plan their reunion, and join her husband's family for dinner to mark what would have been his 58th birthday.

Instead, on this weekend that was supposed to be about candy hearts and a delightful extra day off for Presidents Day, the loved ones of those killed in the Thursday night crash of Continental Connection Flight 3407 faced the sad, heart-breaking task of going about their plans without them.

Maddy's game

At noon Saturday, Maddy Loftus' old college friends and fellow members of the women's hockey team took to the ice at the Buffalo State rink. For a day and a

See **Plans** on Page B2



Zilly Rosen puts the finishing touches on her giant cupcake portrait of Presidents Obama and Lincoln on Saturday in Washington, D.C.

Display of portrait in D.C. is icing on baker's cake

By JON SHAM

NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — Zilly Rosen thought her 15 minutes of fame had come and gone.

In December, the 41-year-old Buffalo baker was featured in Time magazine's Person of the Year issue, which featured a portrait of the new president that she made entirely of cupcakes.

But on Saturday, the halls of the Smithsonian Institution's American Art Museum were filled with cake-loving fans eager to view Rosen's one-day exhibit, "Presidential Cupcakes," her 11-by-17-foot mural of Presidents Lincoln and Obama.

The temporary culinary installation was made from more than 5,900

cupcakes — all baked and frosted by Rosen and her crew, and transported from Buffalo in a U-Haul.

"I have always been a baker," says Rosen, who is also an artist. "I'm more comfortable with a piping bag in my hand than a paintbrush."

Rosen began baking at 15 and has had numerous baking jobs, including working at Dolci on Elmwood Avenue in Buffalo, which helped sponsor her for the presidential project by donating baking space. Now, Rosen is only a few months from opening her own shop, Zillycakes, at 841 Elmwood Ave. Her tagline: Feed your Imagination.

The exhibit was part of the museum's Presidential Fun Day, and was

See **Cupcakes** on Page B2

INSIDE: • Neighborhood News / Page B3 • Obituaries / Pages B6 - B8 • Weather / Page B16

Business Today / Page B9 • Personal Finance / Page B11 • Stocks, mutual funds / Page B13-15

CONTINUED FROM CITY & REGION COVER

Health care groups press governor

STIMULUS • from B1

as high as \$14.2 billion.

While Paterson's hands are tied as far as how he can spend some of the federal money, there are ways funds can be shifted around, especially in the area of health care.

The federal bill, expected to be signed next week by President Obama, includes nearly \$11 billion in additional Medicaid aid for New York over the next 27 months. Seventy percent of that will go to the state, with the remainder to counties and New York City.

The new money for Medicaid merely lowers the percentage that New York State now pays for the health insurance program for the elderly, disabled and poor. That, then, will free up money the state was otherwise earmarking for Medicaid for other uses.

Paterson said he would be interested in using some federal money to undo some of the more than \$500 million worth of "nuisance" tax and fee hikes on everything from entertainment admissions to clothing sales.

"I didn't want to put them in," he said of the taxes. He also wants to restore some social programs cut in his budget plan and cuts he made to higher education.

But health care groups late last week were already mounting a furious campaign to pressure Paterson to use any additional Medicaid stimulus money for health care initiatives. Paterson on Saturday disputed those claims, saying Washington left the Medicaid money discretionary for a reason.

"They really wanted stimulus and they wanted deficit reduction," he said.

The most direct beneficiary of Washington's stimulus legislation will be New York's public schools, which are in line for \$2.5 billion in additional federal aid over the next two years.

Paterson said half of that money will be used in the upcoming fiscal year that begins

April 1. By law, the money must go to restoring proposed cuts to school aid, and with Paterson having planned a \$700 million reduction in state funding for the state's 700 school districts, the money appears to more than cover that amount.

Public school advocates, though, have insisted Paterson's true school aid cut number in the coming year totaled \$2.5 billion. Critics, however, have worried that the federal bailout for New York will hamper long-stalled efforts to rein in school spending. State aid to schools since 2003 has grown 48 percent, and yet property taxes are still soaring.

The federal package also includes \$556 million for New York for "flexible" education aid. That means the state can use the money for any purpose, including non-educational programs. Another \$5 billion nationwide pot of funds will be eligible for states meeting certain educational performance standards.

High-needs schools, such as Buffalo, could strongly benefit by a provision sending \$940 million over two years in Title I funding to help New York schools meet the federal No Child Left Behind requirements. Another \$760 million will go for special-education programs.

College students with Pell grants will see a \$500 increase in their maximum award in the bill that will send New York \$180 million for the popular program.

The federal bill included a surprise for New York — \$1.9 billion in Medicaid funds for the 2008/09 budget. It comes just two weeks after Paterson and lawmakers pushed through \$1.6 billion worth of cuts, tax hikes and fund swaps to close the gap. Paterson Saturday said he'd now use that new pot of funds to help close the 2009 projected deficit.

New York is in line to get \$1.25 billion for mass transit improvements, \$1.1 billion of which will go to the transit sys-

tem in the New York City area. Another \$1.1 billion is for roads and highway work, of which upstate will see a considerable share.

There is also money for water and sewer projects and high-speed rail initiatives. New York will also get about \$126 million for energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts. Paterson said the state expects \$404 million from the bill to help low-income residents weatherize their homes.

While the state has already identified nearly 2,000 shovel-ready projects — including new facilities at the University at Buffalo and the downtown expansion of Erie Community College — the Paterson administration has said it will work with local governments to identify priority projects it may have missed in its preliminary assessments.

But state officials have cautioned that tight federal guidelines will push off many signature-style projects, such as the Peace Bridge replacement span, because they are not far enough along in the design or approval phase.

The federal package also includes \$1.3 billion for New York for additional food stamp benefits and \$1.3 billion to pay for a 33-week expansion of unemployment benefits, bringing the period laid-off workers can get the jobless benefits to 59 weeks. Another \$100 million will go for child care programs for low-income residents.

On the surface, the bailout would appear to all but erase much of the state's deficit. But Laura Anglin, the governor's budget director, said a sizable portion of the spending will have no impact on budget-balancing efforts because they are outside the budget process.

Also, if Paterson removes much of the \$500 million in planned tax hikes, then that amount has to be made up using stimulus money to cover the lost revenues.

e-mail: tprecious@buffnews.com



Charles Lewis/Buffalo News

Canisius High School postponed a ceremony during which crash victim Beverly Eckert was to present a scholarship in honor of her husband, 9/11 victim Sean Rooney.

Friends, family find ways to commemorate victims

PLANS • from B1

half, they had shared their grief and shock over the loss of their friend. But for the reunion game, they set aside their heavy hearts, broke out of their team huddles yelling "Maddy!" and then played with all their might.

"I think this is what Maddy would have wanted," said Lindsay Welch, 24, who had roomed with Loftus during college. "She would want everyone to play."

She pointed out two Bengals jerseys with No. 10 — Maddy's number — displayed on the glass behind the team benches.

"They know she's out there," Welch said as she watched the hockey game from the stands. "She's watching over everyone."

Around Welch, several fans wore heart-shaped red buttons with the No. 10 and a little hockey puck painted on them in tribute to Loftus.

The reunion game was the first that Loftus, who lived in Parsippany, N.J., had been able to return for since she left Buffalo State in 2004 after her sophomore year.

Her former teammates had made plans for a fun weekend together. They were going to play one game at their old ice rink, head out to dinner at a bar and grill on Elmwood Avenue and then dance the rest of the night away at a club downtown.

"Maddy loved to dance," Emma Wadsworth, a friend and former teammate, recalled.

Wadsworth and Jamie Overbeck, a former teammate who is now an assistant women's hockey coach at Buffalo State, were at Buffalo Niagara International Airport on Thursday night, waiting for members of the team to fly into town.

Overbeck was waiting for Loftus. Wadsworth was waiting for another teammate, Janelle Junior, who arrived at 9:20 p.m. from Seattle, followed 70 minutes later by her husband, James Junior, at 10:30 p.m. The Juniors went home with Wadsworth, not knowing that 10 minutes before James landed, Flight 3407 had crashed into a house less than five miles away.

Wadsworth and the Juniors learned the terrible truth when they got home and turned on the TV news.

"It was just disbelief," Janelle Junior said. "Just praying she wasn't on the plane. We saw it was from New Jersey and saw it was the time [Loftus] was getting in."

Overbeck remained at the airport hours after the crash, knowing that the accident had happened but hoping that somehow her friend had survived.

Right after the crash, there was talk of canceling the game. But in the end, they knew they had to go through with it.

"I think we had to play," Wadsworth said. "I don't really think it was ever an option not to. It definitely crossed our minds... 'What do we do now?' The more we thought about it, it wasn't realistic to not play. Maddy would... she would have been thoroughly disappointed if we hadn't played today."

They decided to dedicate the game to Loftus and all reunion games in the future would be called "Maddy's Game."

The women played Saturday before a small crowd of loyal fans. They were nearly outnum-

bered by the crush of local and national reporters and photographers for what was supposed to be a laid-back scrimmage.

As they played, the teammates said they couldn't help but think of Loftus.

"She popped into my head the entire game," Wadsworth said.

After the game, the women shook hands, removed their head gear, and gathered in a circle on the ice. They brought with them 10 long, white candles, lighting each before they knelt.

James Junior, a minister, led the women in a quiet prayer. Several wept, while other comforted the grieving with pats on the back. They wiped away their tears before arranging themselves for a team photo.

Wadsworth was later asked what she would think about when she received a copy of the photograph.

Breaking down in tears, she replied: "That Maddy wasn't there."

A missing guest

The Valentine's Day wedding of Lauren Dunford and Keith Kuwik was held Saturday, though the day was tinged with sadness.

Lorin Maurer, 30, the girlfriend of Kuwik's brother, Kevin, was traveling to Buffalo on Flight 3407 to attend the wedding.

The Kuwik brothers' father, Edward J., a former Erie County legislator, said Saturday afternoon that the wedding would be held as planned.

Family members also told The Buffalo News that the bridal couple planned to place a single red rose on the altar at the church to honor Maurer.

A dogged advocate

Each year since her husband, Sean Rooney, died in the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center, Beverly Eckert came back to her hometown to celebrate his birthday.

This year, in addition to marking what would have been Rooney's 58th birthday on Sunday, Eckert was to attend a ceremony at Canisius High School to award a memorial scholarship in Rooney's name.

Eckert, 57, also was planning to meet with a number of her former classmates from Sacred Heart Academy to coordinate their 40th class reunion.

Instead, Eckert's family and her friends in the close-knit communities of Canisius High School and Sacred Heart are mourning the loss on Flight 3407 of the dogged advocate for the families of those killed on 9/11.

But they also vow to continue with the events and initiatives that were important to Eckert.

"We are going ahead with [the 40th reunion], but it will be difficult," said Kathleen Delaney, a classmate and close friend of Eckert. "But I know there will be a lot of good talk and laughter, because that's the way she was."

The ceremony for the Sean Rooney Memorial Scholarship was to be held Friday, but it was postponed, Delaney said.

The scholarship was established in 2002 and is given each year to a gifted but financially needy student, if possible a

graduate of the Catholic Academy of West Buffalo or a West Side resident.

High school officials could not be reached Saturday, but the school posted a note recognizing Eckert on its Web site.

"Beverly was a lovely woman who spent the last several years working hard to take the tragedy of Sean's death and have something positive come from it," John Knight, the school's president, said in a statement.

Delaney got to know Eckert so well in school because their last names were so close alphabetically that they often found themselves seated near each other in class.

Eckert was a gifted artist, Delaney said, and won the Voice of Democracy Award for a speech she gave as a junior.

"She had a wonderful sense of mischief, and she could drag anybody along with her," Delaney said.

Delaney last spoke to Eckert on Wednesday night, and planned to have her over at her home Friday night for pizza and wine and lively conversation.

They planned to meet Saturday morning at the Sheridan Family Restaurant to go over details of the reunion with their classmates.

Instead, as word of Eckert's death in the crash spread Friday, Sacred Heart classmates reached out to each other by phone and e-mail, and later met at the school.

Eckert was to receive the 2009 Distinguished Alumna Award from the school in May, and school officials plan to give the award posthumously, said Eileen Hettich, alumni relations coordinator.

"The award was to honor all the wonderful things she's done," Hettich said. "That's not erased because God chose to take her now."

e-mail: mbecker@buffnews.com and swatson@buffnews.com

Lottery Picks /

Winning numbers for Saturday

N.Y. Evening Number: 129
Lucky Sum: 12
N.Y. Midday Number: 342
Lucky Sum: 9

Win Four Evening: 2637
Lucky Sum: 18
Win Four Midday: 1817
Lucky Sum: 17

Take Five: 18 20 30 33 36

Pick 10:
1 2 3 18 23 30 32 33 36 37
40 46 48 55 62 69 70 71 74 76

N.Y. Lotto: 3 34 37 38 46 59
Bonus number: 25
Extra number: 16

Penn. Evening Number: 740
Penn. Midday Number: 348

Big 4 Evening: 1660
Big 4 Midday: 1338

Late numbers for Friday

Take Five: 3 5 10 20 33
Mega Millions: 25 36 37 40 51
Mega Ball: 20

These numbers are unofficial. For official New York Lottery results go to buffalo.com/lottery or your lottery retailer.

Design began as computer image

CUPCAKES • from C1

assembled in the Luce Foundation Center on Friday.

Why do smart kids fail?

- WEAK BASIC SKILLS
- FRUSTRATION WITH SCHOOL
- LACK OF CONFIDENCE
- NO MOTIVATION
- WE CAN HELP!

Huntington LEARNING CENTER

Your child can learn.

Lancaster, Lockport, Kenmore, Orchard Park, Williamsville

CALL 1-800-CAN-LEARN

The Smithsonian was happy to have her. "I think the timeliness of it is just ideal," said Jo Ann Sims, chief of external affairs for the American Art Museum. "The bicentennial of Lincoln's birthday, combined with the election of President Obama, has sort of poised [us] for a special moment in American history, this weekend."

Sims said Rosen submitted a proposal to the museum, "and I was just immediately entranced and intrigued by the whole notion," she said. "So we put our heads together and said 'How can we make this work?'"

And work it did.

The museum exhibited the

construction of the portrait on its Web site Friday afternoon and reported about 16,000 views. It also received approximately 500 visitors within the first two hours after the unveiling Saturday afternoon.

Rosen's team of about nine friends and employees constructed the portrait on the floor of the museum, using carefully organized and labeled trays. The design came from a picture she assembled as a grid on Adobe Photoshop. Every pixel on her computer screen eventually became a cupcake.

She admits that using grids in art was not her idea. But "doing it with cupcakes was original," she says, "that was my, sort of, little twist that catapulted this to a whole different realm."

Rosen's future cake shop will rely on the same principle of taking something people know and adding a "little twist."

"We're not a bakery," she said. "We're really a custom cake studio." As Rosen uses flour, eggs and milk as her medium for art, she wants to include her customers in the creation of their cake. "It's an artistic process, and they're part of that process," she said.

In addition to the baking operation, Rosen plans to teach baking classes, rent her space for parties and even have an open studio night, when people can try their hands at cake baking under her guidance.

The fleeting nature of Zilly Rosen's edible art became evident around 5:30 p.m., when spectators who had been waiting for hours were offered the chance to chew on a pixel of a president.

Laurel Horn, 22, of Washington, was one of the many who came to the museum to feed both her imagination and her stomach with Rosen's cupcake art.

"It's incredible to have a culinary mosaic," she said.

e-mail: citydesk@buffnews.com

Highway Deicing Salt

North American Salt Company is accepting orders

North American Salt Company stands ready to assist governments and contractors with their highway deicing needs. Bulk rock salt is available at our mine in Goderich, Ontario, the largest rock salt mine in the world. Order minimum of 400 tons. Load between 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. Maximum bed height 12.5 feet.

To order, call 800-323-1641
Monday – Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

North American Salt Company
A Compass Minerals Company

THE BUFFALO NEWS

CENTRAL EDITION

Copyright 2009

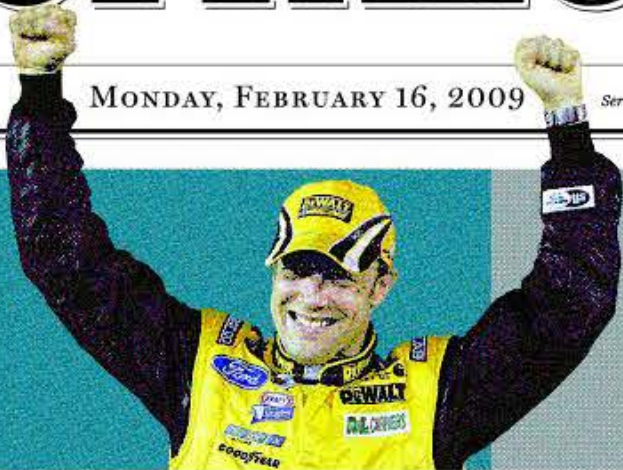
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2009

Serving Western New York since 1880

48 PAGES • 50 CENTS

Champion

Matt Kenseth wins rain-shortened
Daytona 500. Page D1



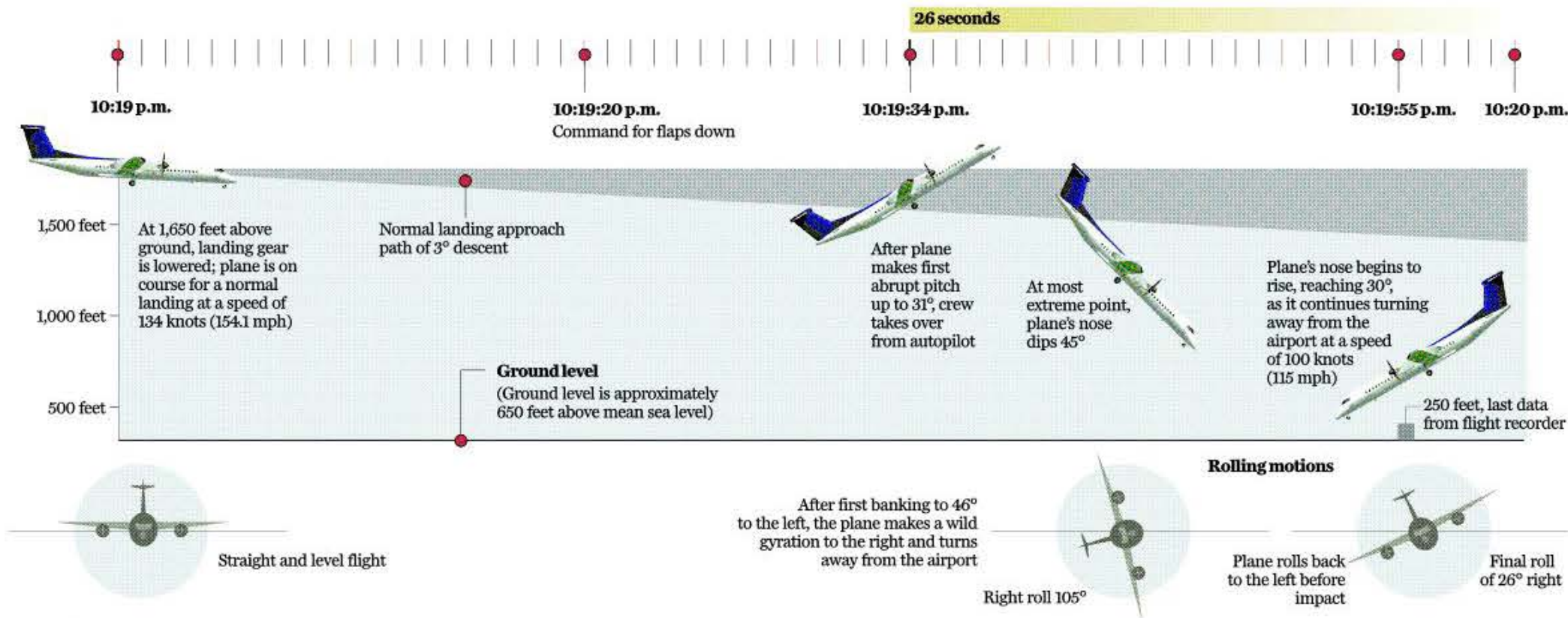
MONEYSMART

What to do when
collectors call.
Page C1



THE TRAGEDY OF FLIGHT 3407

THE FINAL 26 SECONDS



Source: National Transportation Safety Board and Buffalo News research

Buffalo News graphic

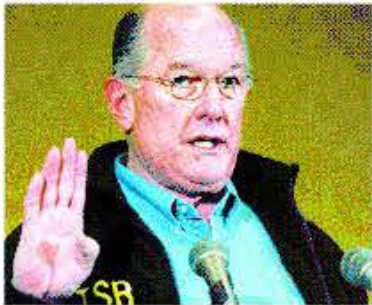
Nearly 20 times faster than normal, the fatal descent

BY MARY B. PASCIAK
AND AARON BESECKER
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

Everything seemed normal for the first 59 minutes and 34 seconds of Flight 3407 from Newark to Buffalo.

But the last 26 seconds launched a terrifying descent in which the crew tried to regain control of the plummeting plane as it was rolling and twisting, according to information retrieved from the two black box recorders of the ill-fated plane and released Sunday.

A minute before the plane crashed, nothing appeared amiss. The autopilot



Robert Kirkham/NTSB

"The plane doesn't seem to have lost anything prior to impact."

Steven R. Chealander, NTSB

was controlling the descent at 154 mph, the landing gear and flaps were lowered, and, at 1,650 feet above the ground, the plane was on course for landing on Runway 23 at Buffalo Niagara International Airport.

But 34 seconds later, the plane suddenly went out of control and began a deadly roller-coaster descent that ended at 10:20 Thursday night.

The pilot and first officer heard a warning tone, signaling that the autopilot had automatically disengaged.

Instead of easing toward the landing strip at a gradual descent, the nose of the plane suddenly pitched up at a 31-degree angle, far steeper than

what's normal for a plane during take-off.

At that point, it appears that the crew took over from the autopilot and rammed the throttles all the way forward, trying to prevent the plane from stalling.

Seconds later, the nose of the plane dipped dramatically. At the same time, the plane rolled to the left, its left wing dipping and the right wing pointing up. Then the plane rolled even more dramatically to the other side.

Inside the cabin, passengers and crew felt a gravitational pull of two Gs, twice the force of gravity.

The wings then came back toward

level flight. But the nose of the plane still pointed down, and the plane was pointed in the opposite direction from the airport. It had reversed direction.

Continental Connection Flight 3407 also was dropping nearly 20 times faster than normal — falling 800 feet in 5 seconds. The last recorded data showed the plane 250 feet above ground level, at 115 mph, less than 5 seconds before impact.

Finally, the plane hit flat on the ground, igniting a fireball that took the lives of all 49 people onboard and one in the Clarence Center house it struck.

See **Crash** on Page A2

Gun charge throws Lynch for a loss on West Coast

BY ALLEN WILSON
NEWS SPORTS REPORTER

Marshawn Lynch is in trouble with the law again, and this time it could really cost him.

Just three days after playing in the Pro Bowl, the Buffalo Bills running back was arrested Wednesday in California on felony gun charges.

According to a report from the Culver City Police Department on Sunday, police officers were patrolling the Fox Hills area of Culver City when they approached Lynch

and two other men seated in a 2006 Mercedes-Benz.

"A subsequent field investigation led to the discovery of a loaded firearm," the report said. "The officers determined the gun belonged to Lynch, and he was arrested for possession of a concealed firearm."

Lynch, 22, was booked at 7:12 p.m. and released about an hour and a half later on a \$35,000 bond.

The case is now in the hands of the Culver City district attorney's office.

It is not known why officers ap-

proached the car or if Lynch is licensed to carry firearms.

"We can confirm that Marshawn was arrested in California and has retained an attorney," Bills Vice President of Communications Scott Berchtold said in a statement Sunday. "We are in the process of trying to gather the facts and will not offer a comment while that process is ongoing."

This is the second brush with the law in less than a year for Lynch, who was involved in a late-night hit-and-run incident in downtown Buffalo on May 31



Marshawn Lynch could face discipline by the NFL as a repeat offender.

when his Porsche Cayenne SUV struck a Toronto woman on Chipewa Street. The woman was treated in a hospital and released later that day after suffering a bruised hip and cut to her thigh that required seven stitches.

Lynch did not face criminal charges. In an agreement with the Eric County district attorney, he pleaded guilty to failing to use sufficient care to avoid hitting a pedestrian and was fined \$100.

The NFL did not discipline Lynch for that incident, but as a repeat offender, he could face a sus-

pension for violating the league's personal conduct policy.

Gun possession and safety have become hot-button topics with the NFL in light of New York Giants wide receiver Plaxico Burress being arrested on two felony charges in December after accidentally shooting himself at a Manhattan nightclub.

Lynch rushed for 1,038 yards with eight touchdowns and caught a 47 passes and another score in his second season with the Bills.

e-mail: awilson@buffnews.com

INDEX

Business TodayB7
City & RegionB1
ClassifiedE1
ComicsC8
CrosswordE2, E8
EntertainmentC6
JingoA4
LotteriesB2
MoneySmartC1
ObituariesB4
OpinionA10
Picture PageA12
SportsD1
TelevisionC10

WEATHER

Clouds giving way to sunshine. High temperature 30, low 18. Details on Page B10.



Derek Gee/Buffalo News

On a sunny but chilly Sunday, Alexis Rosario tries to keep warm on Allen Street.

INSIDE THE NEWS

Obama heading West for support

WASHINGTON — Keeping the economy front and center, President Obama heads West to sign the \$787 billion stimulus bill and tackle the home mortgage crisis. The appeals for support follow scant GOP backing in Congress for his agenda. Story on A5.

Crude prices down, but gasoline up

NEW YORK — Crude oil closed Thursday at its lowest point for 2009, but the average price of gasoline rose to \$1.95 a gallon on the same day, its peak for the year. The upside-down energy market has left gas cut off from its usual economic moorings. Story on A5.

Clinton embarks on tour of Asia

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is ready to deliver a message about the Obama administration's "desire for more rigorous and persistent commitment and engagement" during her tour of Asia this week. Story on A8.



WEB SAMPLER

Jeff Simon has made his annual predictions, dubbing the 81st annual Academy Awards the "Underdog Oscars." Review his choices and vote for your favorites at the Arts Beat blog at www.buffalonews.com/artsbeat

THE TRAGEDY
OF FLIGHT 3407

Federal agencies differ on autopilot's use during icing

CRASH • from A1

Aviation Administration as light, moderate or severe.

"We have not gotten reports yet suggesting it was severe icing," Chealander said.

The takeoff of Flight 3407 was delayed for more than two hours from New Jersey on Thursday night, departing at 9:20. The delay, though, was related to winds as high as 57 mph in the metropolitan New York City area, Chealander said, not because of any weather conditions in the Buffalo area.

"It really was not a bad weather day, and they chose to launch," he told reporters gathered at the Buffalo/Niagara Marriott in Amherst.

The crew turned on the de-icing system 11 minutes after takeoff, and it remained on throughout the flight, he said.

As in most routine flights, autopilot was engaged, controlling the plane's maneuvers prior to landing. But the autopilot shut off just half a minute after the landing gear was lowered, signaling to the flight crew that conditions were too extreme for autopilot to handle.

As federal investigators continue to comb through the evidence, the level of icing is likely to become a key factor. The manufacturer of the Bombardier Dash 8 Q400 recommends that in "severe" icing, autopilot be disengaged so the pilot can correct for weather conditions more efficiently, Chealander said.

In general, the NTSB recommends that when icing occurs, "you might want to disengage the autopilot so you have a manual feel for what might be changing because of the ice," he said.

"We suggest you take it off autopilot to better feel the airplane and stay ahead of changes as a result of the icing," he said.

But the FAA offers a different recommendation to pilots who encounter icing conditions.

This federal agency encourages pilots to "use the autopilot to help you



Derek Gee/Buffalo News

State police man a roadblock at Goodrich and Clarence Center roads, where they were keeping curiosity-seekers away from the crash site Sunday.

handle the workload in these highly intense weather situations. To say they shouldn't have been flying on autopilot is not correct," Chealander said.

The FAA has not adopted the NTSB's guidelines.

And that may become a point of contention between the two agencies in the months ahead as the investigation continues.

"The FAA sees things a little differ-

ently than we do," Chealander said.

Investigators are continuing to dig through the debris on Long Road in Clarence, still searching for the remains of victims, as well as pulling out plane parts.

"The plane doesn't seem to have lost anything prior to impact," Chealander said.

Crews have found all six blades of Engine 2, he said. Engine 1 was con-

sumed by fire, but fragments of four blades, all badly burned, have been found.

A crane is being used to lift the engines and put them on the road for investigators to examine, he said.

In addition to its de-icing system consisting of pneumatic boots and electrically heated propellers, the plane also has a related, "sophisticated" system that helps deal with icing,

Chealander said.

The NTSB will continue to piece together evidence and try to determine what caused the disaster. But that may require considerable time.

e-mail: mpasciak@buffnews.com and
abesecker@buffnews.com

Identifying victims of Clarence crash to take weeks

By HENRY L. DAVIS AND JAY REY
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

The difficult task of identifying the 50 victims of Continental Flight 3407 progressed Sunday as specialists combed through body fragments and personal belongings after the crash in Clarence Center.

Assuming the clear weather continues, officials said they expect to remove the remains by the end of the week from the crash site on Long Street.

But identifying all the dead could take many more weeks of forensic work in the morgue.

"Our primary mission now is reuniting the remains with their families. But it's like an archaeological dig, a slow and methodical process," said Dr. Anthony Billittier IV, Erie County health commissioner.

Thursday night's crash of the commuter airplane also leaves many unanswered questions for residents touched by the tragedy.

So, as officials investigated the cause and searched for bodies, they also spent part of Sunday trying to provide answers during a briefing in Clarence High School.

"It's an opportunity to take care of things that might be falling through the cracks," Clarence Supervisor Scott A. Bylewski said.

One of the key messages: No environmental or medical hazards have been found around the crash site, where 12 properties were evacuated after the turboprop Bombardier Dash 8 Q400 went down atop one of the houses.

Such disasters bring together a host of specialists to give names to the victims by matching dental records, fingerprinting, studying bones and conducting DNA tests to determine unique genetic qualities.

Teeth are one of the basic pieces of evidence because they are the most likely body part to survive an intense fire.

In this case, Billittier said his colleagues "hit the ground running" because Dr. James J. Woytash, the county medical examiner, is a dentist, as well as a pathologist, and is helped by Dr. Raymond Miller of Lancaster, a consulting forensic dentist.

Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pa., sent a forensic anthropologist accompanied by a team of graduate students



Derek Gee/Buffalo News

Blake Heim, 3½, leaves a flower at the crash memorial at Clarence Center United Methodist Church. Related photo on the Picture Page, A12.

to help examine human skeletal remains. Bones can be used to estimate age, race and sex. They also can show identifying injuries from the past, such as fractures.

A federal Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team, known as DMORT, arrived with 41 people and equipment to set up mobile morgues and to help with search and recovery.

Team members also will assist with an emotionally tough but essential part of the investigation — talking to family members about obtaining dental and medical records, and asking about distinguishing features, such as scars, tattoos, jewelry and clothing.

As a last resort, officials will turn to DNA testing of tissue to identify an individual, a process that has begun in this case. The analyses are being done by the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology.

"We're making significant progress, but it will take weeks of work in the morgue and weeks also for the DNA results," Billittier said.

He declined to say how many individuals had been identified, explaining that he and his colleagues preferred to consult first with victims' family members.

"Out of respect for the families, we will not release numbers," Billittier

said.

County officials established a Health Operations Center at the Erie County Medical Center campus on Gridler Street to coordinate efforts. The morgue, where bodies are being taken, also is located on the medical center campus.

As they make their way through the body parts, officials must document everything they come across, requiring a small army of radiologists, technicians, coroners, computer personnel, and security and support staff.

"The challenge is the enormity and complexity of the task," said Scott Zimmerman, county laboratory director.

While the experts continued to comb the site, the minds of area residents and others remained elsewhere.

By midafternoon Sunday, more than two dozen bouquets of flowers and other items had been placed outside Clarence Center United Methodist Church.

At the public briefing, dozens of Clarence residents asked questions and received a wide-ranging status report from town, county and state officials.

Residents of Long Street, for instance, wanted to know about the return of utilities and other services.

"What do we do about mail, garbage pickup — the normal aspects of life?" asked Kathy Hoffman.

David Harrington, who made the initial call to 911 about the crash, expressed concern about heat in the homes and water pipes, especially if temperatures decline significantly before evacuees are allowed to return.

"I just want to make sure we're not forgotten," he said.

The incident has been particularly stressful for Harrington. He didn't know the exact address of the home destroyed by the airplane, so he told the 911 operator to get emergency personnel to his house. He then watched in dismay throughout the night as television news shows displayed his address as the site of the crash.

"People kept calling me thinking I was dead," he said.

David Bissonette, Clarence's coordinator of emergency services, said utilities had been restored at all but two homes. Once investigators complete their work, the goal calls for allowing most residents back in their homes by the end of the week. But a house adjacent to the home destroyed in the

crash also had significant damage and will require additional work, he said.

Among other issues discussed:

- Cleanup of debris and any soil found to be contaminated is expected to begin immediately after recovery of human remains, probably Friday or Saturday, and will take about a week to complete. But full restoration of the properties, such as reseeding lawns, will wait until spring, said Daniel King, regional spill engineer for the state Department of Environmental Conservation.

- Curiosity-seekers have been warned. Erie County Sheriff Timothy B. Howard and Clarence Town Attorney Steven B. Bengart, responding to several incidents since the crash, said authorities will arrest and prosecute anyone found trespassing at the crash site. A portion of Goodrich Road had to be closed for several hours Sunday, because people were stopping, getting out of their vehicles and walking through residents' yards to get a view of the crash site.

- "It was a crush of people," State Police Capt. Steven A. Nigrelli said Sunday. "We will shut the road down again, if we see what we did today."

- A telephone hotline — 211 — for residents to call with questions will operate 24 hours a day as the cleanup and investigation continue. Officials stressed that residents should call that number, not 911, for non-emergency questions. The hotline received about 150 calls Sunday. Additional information is available at the Clarence Web site, clarence.ny.us.

- A number of efforts have begun to aid families and help children cope with the tragedy.

In addition to the town, information is available from the American Red Cross (buffaloredcross.org), Clarence Central School District (clarenceschools.org) and Clarence Chamber of Commerce.

- Continental Airlines and its insurance carrier have agreed to pay town expenses associated with the crash, Bengart said.

- The state has granted Clarence residents a one-week extension — to Feb. 24 — for paying their property taxes.

News Staff Reporter Aaron Besecker contributed to this report.
e-mail: hdavis@buffnews.com
e-mail: jrey@buffnews.com

THE BUFFALO NEWS

CENTRAL EDITION

Copyright 2009

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2009

Serving Western New York since 1880

54 PAGES • 50 CENTS

ICE WARS

School hockey playoffs begin this week with new format. Page D4



STREISAND SPEAKS

Dishing with Babs as she looks ahead at age 66.

Page C1



Muslim influence speculated in slaying

Estranged husband charged with murder

By FRED O. WILLIAMS
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

The gruesome death of Orchard Park resident Aasiya Zubair Hassan — who was found decapitated — and the arrest of her estranged husband are drawing widespread attention, as speculation roils about the role that the couple's religion may have played.



Aasiya Hassan was decapitated. Muzzammil Hassan is accused.

Muzzammil Hassan, 44, was arrested Thursday and charged with second-degree murder after telling police his wife was dead at the office of their television station in the Village of Orchard Park.

While Muslim leaders have urged against applying cultural stereotypes to the crime, advocates for women linked the killing to attitudes in Muslim societies.

"This was apparently a terroristic version of honor killing, a murder rooted in cultural notions about women's subordination to men," said Marcia Pappas, New York State president of the National Organization for Women.

She decried the scant national media attention paid to the story, which broke the same day as the commuter plane crash that killed 50 people in Clarence.

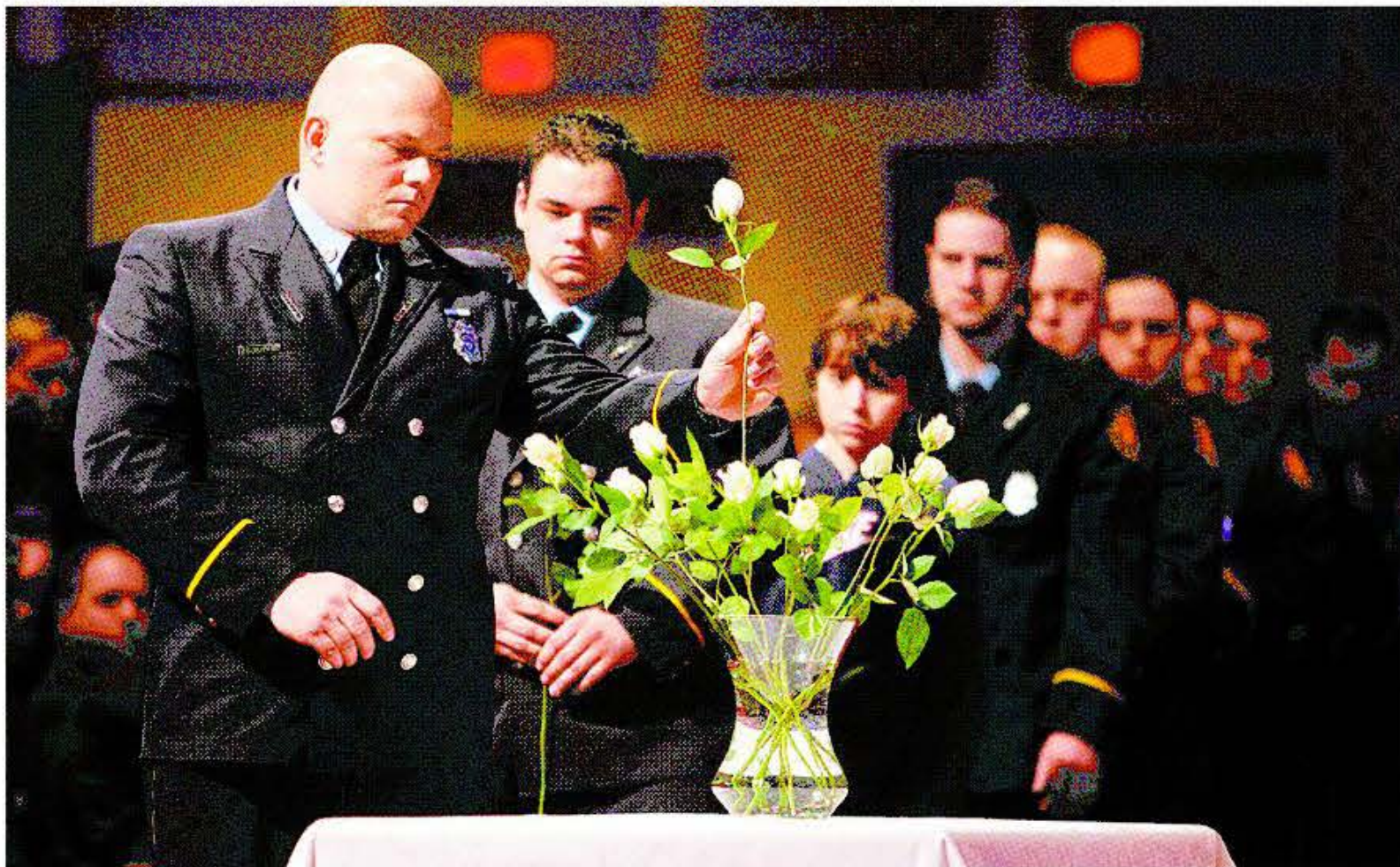
While domestic violence affects all cultures, Muslim women find it harder to break the silence about it because of a stigma, she said.

"Too many Muslim men are using their religious beliefs to justify violence against women," she said.

See **Hassan** on Page A2

THE TRAGEDY OF FLIGHT 3407

Experience level of pilots assessed



Derek Gee/Bufalo News

Clarence Center Volunteer Fire Company members place white roses in a vase, one for each of the 50 people killed in the crash of Flight 3407.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Families of victims find devastation at crash site

One hundred pay visit to debris-littered scene where loved ones died.

By LOU MICHEL
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

They moved briskly from the buses, often two abreast, young and old, some clutching flowers, others teddy bears. All were on a solemn mission Monday to visit for the first time the Clarence Center site where their loved ones died on Flight 3407.

What they saw were scorched debris, torn fuselage, a gutted airplane engine and four front

See **Families** on Page A2

ON PAGE A6:

REMOVAL OF WRECKAGE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED WEDNESDAY.

MEMORIAL SERVICE BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER TO MOURN.

THE LIST OF VICTIMS

ON BUFFALONEWS.COM:

PASSENGERS AND CREW OF FLIGHT 3407: THEIR STORIES

AUDIO: LAST RADIO TRANSMISSION FROM THE PLANE

VIDEO GALLERY OF THE CRASH

On regional airlines, cockpit time far less

By MARY B. PASCIAK AND MATTHEW SPINA
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

The captain of Flight 3407, Marvin D. Renslow, completed his training on a Dash 8 just two months ago and had 110 hours flying the turboprop.

His first officer, Rebecca Lynne Shaw, had built up about 770 hours flying the Dash 8 — roughly the hours a commercial pilot amasses in a year.

"As a general rule, the experience level in regional airlines is about a tenth of the experience level in major airlines," said Douglas M. Moss, an airline pilot with more than 30,000 hours in the air and president of AeroPacific Consult-

ing of Torrance, Calif.

"There's a huge experience disparity. It should raise the eyebrows of a lot of people," he said.

A National Transportation Safety Board member said Monday that investigators trying to determine the cause of Thursday night's crash will assess, among other things, the training of Flight 3407's crew, its schedule over the previous week and the prior 72 hours, in particular, to confirm they had the amount of rest that federal rules require.

Renslow and Shaw worked for Colgan Air, the subcontractor that runs Continental Airlines commuter flights. Pilots and aviation ex-

See **Pilots** on Page A2

Clinton sets upbeat note by visiting Japan first

By GLENN KESSLER AND BLAINE HARDEN
WASHINGTON POST

TOKYO — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton arrived here on the first stop of her Asian tour Monday night, declaring that she wanted "to create networks of partners in order to deal with the problems that no nation, even ours, can deal with alone," such as climate change

and the global economic crisis.

Clinton, at an elaborate arrival ceremony, lauded the U.S.-Japanese partnership, calling it "a cornerstone of our efforts around the world."

At a news conference today, Clinton warned North Korea against a possible missile launch, saying it would hurt relations. "The possible missile launch that North Korea is talking about would be very unhelpful," she

said.

Her comments came a day after the North claimed it has the right to "space development" — a term it has used previously to disguise a missile test as a satellite launch. Intelligence indicates the North may be planning another launch. The claim came Monday, the 67th birthday of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

During Monday's arrival ceremony, Clinton again emphasized

that she is making her first trip to Asia as chief U.S. diplomat to signify the importance of U.S.-Asian relationships. She is the first secretary of state in nearly 50 years to start his or her tenure with a trip to Asia, in contrast to the usual European and Middle Eastern tours.

But for Japan, even greater importance is attached to the

See **Clinton** on Page A2



Getty Images

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton arrives Monday at Tokyo's Haneda Airport to start Asian tour.

INDEX

Business Today B6
City & Region B1
Classified D7
Comics C8
Crossword D7, D10
Entertainment C4
Jingo C7
Life & Arts C1
Lotteries B2
Obituaries B4
Opinion A8
Picture Page C10
Sports D1
Television C6

WEATHER

Mostly cloudy. High temperature 34, low 25.
Details on Page B8.



Charles Lewis/Bufalo News

Snow mounds and sunshine provide the backdrop Monday for skateboarder Eric Steehler on UB's North Campus.

INSIDE THE NEWS

Sheriff opts not to charge Phelps

COLUMBIA, S.C. — A South Carolina sheriff said Monday he was not going to charge Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps after a photo showed him smoking from a marijuana pipe. The sheriff decided that he didn't have enough physical evidence to charge Phelps.
Story on A4.

N-sub collision is reported

LONDON — Nuclear submarines from Britain and France collided deep in the Atlantic Ocean this month, authorities said Monday. But officials said the low-speed crash did not damage the vessels' nuclear reactors or missiles or cause radiation to leak.
Story on A4.

Pet chimp mauls woman, is shot

HARTFORD, Conn. — A 200-pound chimpanzee kept as a pet was shot and killed by police Monday after it mauled a woman visiting its owner and later cornered an officer in his cruiser, authorities said. The woman was hospitalized in "very serious" condition.
Story on A4.



WEB SAMPLER

Fashion week is under way in New York. To keep track of the styles and the celebrities, go to buffalonews.com/interactives.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Pilot training ‘good enough, strict enough’

PILOTS • from A1

perts interviewed by The Buffalo News faulted neither Renslow nor Shaw for the crash that killed all 49 people aboard and a man on the ground in Clarence.

The experts said Renslow, 47, and Shaw, 24, were probably typical of the pilots who fly for regional airlines:

- They slog through long days for modest pay.
- They have fewer years in the business than their big-airline counterparts.
- More importantly, they have fewer experiences to draw on when facing the judgment calls.

“In reading hundreds of accident reports, the more experience the pilot has, the more able he is to handle the unique situations of any emergency,” Moss said.

“That is one advantage of flying a major airline: You have tremendously more experience,” he said. “The bag of resources a crew has is much larger. In the Hudson, Capt. Sullenberger wasn’t using procedures that are written somewhere. There’s no training for what he did. It’s all just experience.”

Capt. Chesley B. Sullenberger III was almost 58 and had about 20,000 hours of flight time when bird strikes took out both engines of a Boeing 737 and he crash-landed US Airways Flight 1549 perfectly into the Hudson River on Jan. 15, saving all 155 people onboard.

Renslow, by comparison, had built up 3,379 hours by Feb. 12, and Shaw 2,244.

Pilots employed by regional airlines are working their way up. Pilots for major airlines might earn \$100,000 to \$120,000, and first officers \$60,000 to \$70,000. Their counterparts with a regional airline are likely earn one-third to one-half as much. “So that first officer who was 24 years old was probably making \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year,” Moss said.

The NTSB considered Renslow and Shaw as experienced. Before Renslow trained on the Dash 8, he had thousands of hours on the smaller Saab twin-engine turboprop. “The training is good enough, strict enough and covers enough to make sure you are ready to do what you have to do when you are in that seat,” said the NTSB’s Steven R. Chealander.

Still, investigators are examining the actions of the crew. They know that Renslow and Shaw turned on the airplane’s de-icing equipment 11 minutes after the plane departed Newark Liberty International Airport. But what next?

Pilots and federal agencies, including the NTSB and the Federal Aviation Administration, don’t have uniform views on what pilots should do about icing, and they can differ on what constitutes severe icing. Pilot experience plays a role.

“A lot of times, it is a very subjective opinion. One guy may say it’s light. Another may say it’s moderate,” said Kirk Ko-

enig, a partner at Expert Aviation Consulting in Indianapolis, who has 25 years of commercial experience.

Renslow and Shaw had remarked about the ice buildup on their airplane — on the cockpit windows and the leading edge of the wings. Pilots interviewed Monday did not call that level of buildup “severe,” which would have required immediate action.

But other pilots, and an on-line course carrying the NASA seal, note that ice becomes more dangerous at lower altitudes. Ice can build more rapidly, air speed slows, and pilots have less room to maneuver.

Further, at any altitude, pilots cannot see the ice buildup on their aircraft’s tail sections. Koenig said experience has taught him that “whatever you see on the wing is three or four times worse on the tail.”

Bombardier, the maker of the Dash 8, has told the NTSB that the airplane is not susceptible to a tail stall, Chealander said. But Koenig theorized that’s just what happened, as ice hampered the tail’s ability to stabilize the front of the aircraft, and the nose lifted sharply as Flight 3407 prepared to land at Buffalo Niagara International Airport.

Koenig suspects that as the autopilot kicked off with an alarm, the crew quickly but wrongly corrected for what they surmised was a “wing stall” — when the wings lack sufficient lift to right the plane.

The crew would have had just seconds to make their decisions. “At the altitude they were at, they probably didn’t have much chance of recovering,” said James M. Burin, director for technical programs for the Flight Safety Foundation in Alexandria, Va.

Said Koenig: “That low to the ground, in this situation, I don’t think it would have mattered if you had Chuck Yeager and Neil Armstrong flying the plane. I think the outcome would have been the same.”

Some airlines and many pilots welcome the use of autopilot because it relieves the workload. Bombardier recommends that when ice becomes severe, the autopilot should be disengaged so the pilot can more efficiently correct for weather conditions, Chealander said.

The NTSB, since an icing-related crash killed 68 people in Roselawn, Ind., in 1994, has wanted the FAA to recommend that pilots disengage the autopilot during icing conditions, to give them a feel for the effect of ice on their aircraft.

The FAA has yet to do so. So some industry experts believe that the tragedy of Flight 3407 would have been avoidable with a clearer policy on how pilots should respond to ice, and what constitutes severe ice. Former NTSB Chairman Jim Hall, for example, says the crash of Flight 3407 was “likely preventable,” had the FAA adequately addressed the risks of icing.

e-mail: mpasciak@buffnews.com and mspina@buffnews.com



Red roses remain in the fence surrounding the crash site after members of the victims’ families visited the scene Monday.

Evidence collection continues

FAMILIES • from A1

steps leading to a house that is no more at 6038 Long St., the place where the plane crashed Thursday night and exploded into a fireball.

Since Friday, family members had expressed a desire to view the crash scene. Beneath Monday’s cold blue afternoon sky, they spent about an hour at the tragic location.

And when they boarded the six big tour buses and two smaller vans to be escorted away by several police vehicles, the more than 100 mourners clearly had left behind part of themselves.

Red roses were placed in the top holes of the plastic orange perimeter fence; still more roses and bouquets of flowers were placed in a semicircle inside the site.

Authorities also allowed a handful of journalists to view the site after the families were taken back to their hotels, as emergency workers resumed their jobs of collecting evidence.

The roar of generators filled the air, and a backhoe’s mechanical arm clawed and lifted the shell of an engine — scorched metal hanging from it — to the edge of the lot for a close inspection by investigators. Bobcats lumbered about, smoothing the surface of the 100- by 200-foot residential property, where Karen and Doug Wielinski’s two-story home once stood.

Closer to the street, the plane’s landing gear was set down by a mailbox that still bore the address “6038” on its side. Next to the four front steps, investigators examined another piece of the plane, its white fuselage.

A big silver trailer, the heavy equipment, workers shoveling debris into trash cans, the voices of dozens of FBI agents, state police, National Safety Transportation Board personnel and other investigators — some of them climbing onto the 27-foot-high tail of the airplane at the back of the lot — all of it merged into a scene reminiscent of a construction site.

“It’s holy ground now,” said Sibyl Burke of Akron, who stopped by a police barricade near the crash site perimeter with her daughter Ann Hess after attending an interfaith prayer service for the victims.

“You struggle with wanting to know where your loved ones took their last breath,” said Hess, who lives in Clarence Center. She and her mother know better than most.

Two years ago, their brother and son — Christopher Cottle, a Tucson, Ariz., convenience store clerk — was fatally shot while trying to stop thieves from stealing beer.

Since the crash, Hess said, she has struggled

with the idea of visiting the scene. “I’ve been trying to avoid the news, but we have a friend whose sister was on the plane,” she said.

John Gillick, a clinical psychologist who is a retired manager of the Buffalo Veterans Affairs Clinical Health Services, said the sites of tragedies attract individuals for different reasons.

“People want to go out and take a look at tragic events for comparative purposes because it reassures them that they are safe,” Gillick said.

Others who had suffered through such experiences “are sensitized to tragedy, and they are only comfortable when they are hyper vigilant,” he said.

For those who feel a need to be part of the unfolding events, Gillick suggested an appropriate response would be to contact the Red Cross and volunteer their services.

As for the relatives of those who died in the crash, Gillick said Monday’s visit can help with mourning. “It’s an action they can take instead of being immobilized,” he said. “It provides them with a sense of connection.”

Soon after the family members visited the site, they issued this statement:

“On behalf of the families of Continental Flight 3407, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to all the agencies who have worked so hard and in such a professional way during our time of grief. The respect you have given to us, our families, and especially the respect and dignity you are giving to our loved ones who were aboard Continental Flight 3407 is valued and appreciated by all of us.”

The National Transportation Safety Board hopes to have the downed plane removed from the site by Wednesday. But Erie County Sheriff Timothy B. Howard said his deputies will continue to provide support to the Clarence Center neighborhood to help cope with the intensive scrutiny it is undergoing.

“No parking” signs, he said, may be posted to discourage outsiders from stopping, and residents have the option of posting “no trespassing” signs on their own property.

State police will continue to maintain high visibility in the neighborhood for the weeks and months to come, according to State Police Capt. Steven A. Nigrelli. “What we’ve been telling the local residents is that if they see anything out of the ordinary, such as trespassing, we want them to contact police,” he said.

News Staff Reporter Patrick Lakamp contributed to this report.

e-mail: lmichel@buffnews.com

Clinton to talk to public

CLINTON • from A1

Clinton made a nine-day visit to China in 1998 and did not stop in Japan.

That nonvisit helped spark what has become a chronic Japanese worry: that the focus of U.S. policy in East Asia has permanently shifted to China, when it is not obsessed with persuading North Korea to get rid of nuclear weapons.

“The fact that Secretary Clinton is making her first foreign trip to Japan is in itself an important and welcome message,” said Takeshi Akamatsu, a spokesman at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “We still have the memories of Bill Clinton flying over us.”

As if to emphasize her interest in Japan, Clinton will mix high diplomacy — including dinner with Prime Minister Tarō Aso — with cultural and symbolic events, such as tea with the empress and the visit to the shrine. She also will meet with the families of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korean agents in the 1970s and 1980s, a highly emotional subject in Japan, and hold a town hall meeting at Tokyo University.

“I think it’s important that we get out of the ministerial buildings and listen to the people in the countries where I’ll be visiting,” Clinton told reporters.

This Clinton visit, however, may still end up worrying the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, which has more or less run Japan as a one-party state since World War II. Under Aso, the ruling party is in desperate trouble. Aso’s approval ratings, after less than half a year in power, have sunk to below 10 percent. And the economy is sliding into an “unimaginable” recession, the chief economist of the Japan’s central bank said last week, citing plunging numbers for industrial output and surging bankruptcies.

Clinton’s schedule suggests that the Obama administration might be hedging its bets on Aso. She is scheduled to meet today with opposition leader Ichiro Ozawa, head of the Democratic Party of Japan. Although secretaries of state often meet opposition leaders, they have rarely done so in Japan.

Polls suggest Ozawa’s party could knock Aso and the LDP out of power in an election that has to be called by September.

As for the substance of Clinton’s talks with the Japanese government, she will sign an agreement today that will move 8,000 U.S. troops from the Japanese island of Okinawa to the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam, a move Japan is largely paying for. Other topics include stalled talks over North Korea’s nuclear program and climate change.

With the collapse of Japanese car and electronic exports in recent months, Japan looks for a new export stream to the United States and believes it could be green technology.

Victim had order of protection against suspect

HASSAN • from A1

After episodes of domestic violence, Aasiya Hassan, 37, filed for divorce Feb. 6 and obtained an order of protection barring her husband from their Orchard Park home, her lawyer, Corey Hogan, said.

She and her husband both worked at Bridges TV, a satellite-distributed news and opinion channel. They launched the station in 2004 in an effort to counter images of Muslim violence and extremism.

Nadia Shahram, a matrimonial lawyer in Williamsville, said that some Muslim men consider divorce a dishonor on their family.

A teacher of family law and Islam at the University at Buffalo Law School, Shahram said that “fanatical” Muslims believe “honor killing” is justified for bringing dishonor on a family.

While it has not been determined whether Aasiya Hassan’s death had anything to do with fanatical beliefs, the community should address the attitudes

that make divorce particularly difficult for many Muslim families, Shahram said.

“I have not had one [case] where the husband wanted to settle outside of the court system,” she said.

In some interpretations, the Quran allows husbands to punish “disobedient” women, Shahram said, adding that this is a minority view.

An open community forum on the issue is scheduled from 3 to 6 p.m. Sunday at the UB Law School’s Moot Court on the North Campus in Amherst, she said. Imam Fajri Ansari, the leader of a Buffalo mosque, and other experts on Islam are scheduled to attend, she said.

Orchard Park police Monday continued to investigate last week’s death and remained quiet about its details.

Police believe that Aasiya Hassan died where she was found, in a hallway at the TV station’s offices on Thorn Avenue in the village, Police Chief Andrew Benz said.

The office was released as a crime scene Saturday, he said,

but the effort to determine the murder weapon continued.

“We’re looking to make sure we find the weapon,” Benz said, adding that police don’t have a confession.

Muzzammil Hassan is scheduled to appear at a felony hearing in Orchard Park on Wednesday to determine bail.

A Family Court hearing today is expected to address the future of the couple’s two children, a girl age 4 and a boy age 6. Their grandparents, having traveled from Texas and Pakistan, are expected to attend, said John Tregilio, a lawyer for the children.

Muzzammil Hassan also has two older children, ages 17 and 18, who lived with the family on Big Tree Road in Orchard Park. The couple had been married eight years.

Naeem Randhawa, a documentary filmmaker in Dallas who worked with the Hassans, said it was apparent that their television venture was in trouble, but not their marriage.

He characterized Muzzammil Hassan as aggressive in a

business sense, with fundraising efforts in the Muslim community that were necessary to keep the station going.

On a personal level, “he was not extremely talkative — he would sit back and listen,” Randhawa said. “He came across not as a passionate guy, [but] more reserved.”

Friends said they remember Aasiya Hassan as a vivacious and intelligent woman. For a time the couple owned a convenience store in Orchard Park where she would work, sometimes with her son.

Muzzammil Hassan graduated magna cum laude with an MBA from the Simon School of Business at the University of Rochester in 1996, according to biographical information on the TV station’s Web site.

In a 2005 interview with The Buffalo News, he said that the idea for the TV station was sparked two years earlier when the couple heard derogatory remarks about American Muslims on a radio talk show.

e-mail: fwilliams@buffnews.com

Corrections

Patricia LeCaste of Buffalo, who was scheduled to fly from Newark to Buffalo on Flight 3407 Thursday night, changed her mind and stayed an extra day in Los Angeles after her flight was delayed and her daughter in Buffalo text-messaged her about bad weather here. The airport where she made her decision was incorrect in a cutline that accompanied a story in Monday’s News.

A photo in Sunday’s editions transposed the names of some Clarence High School students. The students were, from left, Justin Kozlowski, Jake Brinkman, Ally Sebian, Colin Mutton and his brother, Ryan Mutton.

Catholic Health has three

hospitals that are designated stroke centers in this region: Kenmore Mercy, Sisters and Mercy. A story in some editions last Tuesday incorrectly reported that Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center and Millard Fillmore Hospital were the only designated stroke centers in the area.

The Buffalo News corrects published errors of substance. To request a correction, please notify the editor by writing to: P.O. Box 100, Buffalo, NY 14240. Or call The News at 849-4444 and ask to speak to the editor of the department in which the article was published. Or fax your request to 856-5150.

What’s everybody reading?

At BuffaloNews.com you can see the most popular stories of the last 24 hours including the most viewed, most e-mailed and most saved.



THE TRAGEDY
OF FLIGHT 3407

Removal of plane is expected by Wednesday

By PATRICK LAKAMP
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Crews have removed about 50 percent of Continental Connection Flight 3407 from the crash site, Steven R. Chealander of the National Transportation Safety Board said Monday.

"We're putting it in bins and on trailers and getting it prepared to move to other locations," he said.

"The goal is to have everything off the site by Wednesday afternoon. I mentioned the snowstorm that is coming into the Buffalo area, so it is our goal to have the accident site cleaned up and then progress to moving it to a location still to be determined."

Chealander's news conference was the last in a series of daily briefings the federal agency has given since arriving in the Buffalo area Friday.

Investigators are continuing to analyze information from the flight data recorder as they try to determine what caused the 55,000-pound, twin-engine turboprop aircraft to crash on a house in Clarence Center at 10:20 Thursday night.

Chealander said that it could take a year before the agency releases its final report on the cause of the crash that killed 50 people. Weather conditions continue to be one area of inquiry.

Another Continental Connection flight, also a Bombardier Dash 8 Q400, departed Newark, N.J., for Buffalo 27 minutes after the ill-fated Flight 3407, he said.

"It came in, experienced the same icing conditions — moderate icing — and it made it to destination in Buffalo," he said.

During the next few weeks, the agen-

cy hopes to learn more about Thursday night's flying conditions from other pilots. A questionnaire will be sent to every pilot who was in the vicinity that night, Chealander said.

"We want to ask them what icing they experienced, what the flight conditions were and so forth," he said.

The only report indicating severe icing that the NTSB is aware of now is from a pilot who flew in the Dunkirk area, "well south of Buffalo," Chealander said.

Chealander said crews found five of the plane's six de-icing valves at the crash site. That is important because investigators know that the de-icing system was activated. Recovering the valves will help them determine whether the system was working, Chealander said.

The agency has previously said the plane was on autopilot for a portion of

the flight. Bombardier, the manufacturer, recommends that in "severe" icing conditions, autopilot be disengaged so the pilot can correct for weather conditions more efficiently, Chealander said.

A black box from Flight 3407 showed that the crew reported there was "significant" icing on the night the plane crashed. But "significant" icing is not a technical term, Chealander has said. Icing is listed as either slight, moderate or serious.

Other areas of inquiry include the the crew's activities before and during the flight, Chealander said.

He also said the plane's engines have been moved to the road by the crash scene for further inspection. They were to be put on a truck for departure from the site today.

e-mail: plakamp@buffnews.com

SHIBIN YAO, a 37-year-old Chinese national, came to the United States to work in Manhattan in 2007. Yao was employed by PricewaterhouseCoopers, whom she began working for in China in 2004.

She was a manager in the company's financial services advisory practice.

Yao's husband, Pan Xiaojun, also works for the company and flew to Buffalo with her parents after learning of her death on Flight 3407.

— Mark Sommer

MARY JULIA ABRAHAM'S co-workers at Invacare Corp. knew her for her outspokenness.

Co-worker and good friend Marc Schwartz remembers Abraham, on more than one occasion, climbing up onto the table at a business meeting to make a point more persuasively.

"That was Mary. She was passionate," Schwartz told The Buffalo News.

Abraham, 44, had worked at Invacare for about 12 years, most recently as a trainer for the region stretching from Maine to New Jersey.

She worked from her home in West Seneca, where she had moved to be close to her parents, but traveled frequently for her job, Schwartz said.

Schwartz and Abraham were at a Veterans Hospital in East Orange, N.J., last week to help set up a patient with new manual and power wheelchairs.

The patient, a Vietnam veteran, was so smitten with Abraham that he flirted with her throughout the consultation. Abraham, a retired Army Reserve first sergeant, bantered back with him and teased him about being a Marine.

At another point, Abraham and the occupational therapist took out their cell phones to share pictures of their dogs. Abraham was a greyhound rescuer and, Schwartz noted, a member of a women's motorcycle club.

Schwartz dropped her off at the airport that afternoon, gave her a hug and kiss and said goodbye. He learned the awful news about Flight 3407 the next morning.

"Everybody that knew her, loved her. She had such a strong personality," Schwartz said.

— Stephen T. Watson

NICOLE KORCZYKOWSKI, 29, whose parents live in Eden, worked for Barclays Capital, a New York City-area investment firm.

After attending Nichols School, she graduated in 2001 from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, where she had a concentration in finance.

She lived in Manhattan with her boyfriend, Johnathan Perry, who also died aboard Flight 3407.

Perry had been in a relationship with Korczykowski for several years, according to friends of the couple who spoke to the New York Daily News.

"They were definitely in love," one source told the newspaper.

— Aaron Besecker

DAWN MONACHINO typically drove 10 hours round-trip, every two weeks, to be with her mother in Pennsylvania, who was afflicted with Alzheimer disease.

That level of self-sacrifice was indicative of her.

"She was loving, caring and giving," said Michael Monachino, her husband. "She was the one who would remember the tiniest thing that would be important to someone else. That's what she brought to the marriage. She was the center of joy in my life."

Dawn Monachino was from Carbondale, Pa., and graduated from West Chester University of Pennsylvania. She taught elementary school in her native state, as well as in South Carolina, before moving to Clarence after marrying in 1995.

Her dogs, a golden retriever named Lady and a chocolate lab named Shadow, were constant companions.

Monachino was a pharmaceutical representative at Schering-Plough Corp., and was coming back from Newark on a business trip along with Jennifer Neill, also of Clarence, who also perished on Flight 3407.

Michael Monachino said his wife and Neill were initially booked on the flight, switched to another flight, but then rebooked on the ill-fated plane ride.

Prayer service brings community together in grief

By PETER SIMON
AND GENE WARNER
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

Some came to grieve together, to feel a part of a larger community.

Some came because they knew, directly or indirectly, one of the 50 victims.

Others came because they just didn't know where else to turn in their sadness.

Still others came to thank the emergency responders, as demonstrated by two spontaneous 30-second standing ovations for firefighters — both from Buffalo and the volunteer companies — other volunteers and those still manning the crash site of Flight 3407.

But the mourners — almost 2,000 strong — who attended Monday's interfaith community prayer service left Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church in Clarence with something else:

A large dose of hope.

Some of that hope came from a man who apparently had come to the podium straight from the crash site.

The Rev. Steve Biegner of Zion Lutheran Church in Clarence walked to the podium in blue jeans, bearing greetings from the Clarence Center war zone.

In the death and destruction, Biegner found hope — in the crew of firefighters who had run past him late Thursday night, in the volunteer firefighter with the broken hand who jumped into the fray and in the volunteers who have been on the scene since 10:30 p.m. Thursday.

"In the midst of this tragedy, I saw hope," he told the crowd. "Friends, this day has hope."

Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein of Temple Sinai in Amherst put it another way:

"God's light can shine through the wreckage," he told the crowd. "God's light will shine through the wreckage."

Bishop Edward U. Kmiec of the Catholic Diocese of Buffalo found another reason to hope:

"Dear friends, today we weep. The families weep. But there also is a future eternity with God."

The mourners' thoughts stayed with the 50 lives lost in an instant late Thursday night.



Sharon Cantillon/Buffalo News

Rachael Eastlack, top left, embraces her mother, Anita, after adding a red rose honoring a pregnant victim's unborn child to the commemorative vase that had been filled with 50 white roses during Monday's community prayer service in Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church. At right, Melinda Davey and her mother, Linda, join the 2,000 at the service who mourned those who died.



Derek Gee/Buffalo News

A simple glass vase, half-filled with water and sitting on a table with a white tablecloth, became the symbol of that loss.

Emergency responders and members of the Clarence High School Chorus walked silently up to the table. Each placed a white rose in the vase — one for each of the 50 lives lost.

Arianna Oppen, 17, a Clarence High School senior, placed the last rose in the vase.

She said she thought not only about the pregnant woman who died in the wreckage —

and her unborn child — but also of all 50 victims.

"I was thinking about the last person who perished, about their last breath," she said.

Linda Davey and her daughter Melinda, a sophomore at Clarence High School, embraced throughout most of the service and wiped tears from their eyes as they remembered Ellyce Kausner and Douglas C. Wielinski, victims they knew.

The service was helpful as a way "to grieve, to get it out, to connect with one another," Lin-

da Davey said.

County Executive Chris Collins, who organized Monday's prayer service, explained that it was not a memorial service.

"This should allow closure, to allow people to go on," he explained. "This is a community prayer service, not a memorial service. That might be stepping outside our bounds."

The Rev. Karl Eastlack, pastor of Eastern Hills Wesleyan, set the tone for the hourlong service in his opening remarks. "We are all one community,"

VICTIMS OF FLIGHT 3407

The following people are confirmed victims of the Flight 3407 crash Thursday in Clarence. A complete list of the 49 people on the flight from Newark, N.J., to Buffalo has not been released by the airline or by authorities. These names have come from a partial list provided by the airline plus a variety of sources, including friends and family.

- MARY JULIA ABRAHAM, 44 • GEORGE ABU-KAREM, 27, TIBERIAS, ISRAEL • DAVID M. BORNER, 49, PENDLETON • LINDA DAVIDSON, 61, WESTFIELD • RONALD DAVIDSON, 66, WESTFIELD • ALISON L. DES FORGES, 66, BUFFALO • BEVERLY ECKERT, 57, STAMFORD, CONN. • JOHN FIORE, 60, GRAND ISLAND • BRAD GREEN, 53, AMHERST • RON GONZALEZ, 44, NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. • ZHAOFANG GUO, 53, AMHERST • KEVIN JOHNSTON, 52, EAST AMHERST • STEVE JOHNSON, NORTHROP GRUMMAN • GOERGES KARM • ELLYCE KAUSNER, 24, CLARENCE • NICOLE KORCZYKOWSKI, NEW YORK CITY • JEROME KRASUSKI, 53, CHEEKTOWAGA • BRIAN KUKLEWICZ • BETHANY KUSHNER, 19, ANGOLA • SEAN LANG, 19, MONTGOMERYVILLE, PA. • MADELINE LOFTUS, 24, PARSIPPANY, N.J. • LORIN MAURER, 30, PRINCETON, N.J. • COLEMAN MELLETT, 34, EAST BRUNSWICK, N.J. • DON MCDONALD, 48, FORT ERIE, ONT. • DAWN MONACHINO • DAWN MOSSOP, 48, BLOOMFIELD, N.J. • DONALD MOSSOP, 42, BLOOMFIELD, N.J. • SHAWN MOSSOP, 12, BLOOMFIELD, N.J. • JENNIFER NEILL, 34, CLARENCE • GERRY NIEWOOD, 64, GLEN RIDGE, N.J. • MARY "BELLE" PETTYS, 50, WEST SENECA • JOHNATHAN PERRY, 27, NEW YORK CITY • DONNA PRISCO, 52, RANDOLPH, N.J. • MATILDA QUINTERO, 57, WOODBRIDGE, N.J. • FERRIS REID, 44, BLOOMFIELD, N.J. • CAPT. MARVIN RENSLOW, 47, LUTZ, FLA. • JULIE RIES • JOHN ROBERTS III, 48, INDIA • KRISTIN SAFFRAN • REBECCA SHAW, 24, MAPLE VIEW, WASH. • JEAN SRNECZ, 59, CLINTON, N.J. • DARREN TOLSMAN, 45, LANCASTER • SUSAN WEHLE, 55, AMHERST • ERNEST WEST, 54, CLARENCE • DOUGLAS C. WIELINSKI, 61, CLARENCE • CLAY YARBER, 62, RIVERSIDE, CALIF. • SHIBIN YAO • CAPT. JOSEPH ZUFFOLETTO, 27, JAMESTOWN

THE BUFFALO NEWS

CENTRAL EDITION

Copyright 2009

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2009

Serving Western New York since 1880

52 PAGES • 50 CENTS

On the road

The Sabres pound the Leafs, 4-1, in Toronto. Page D1

HIGH-TECH KITCHENS

Thermometers that talk and health-conscious food scales. Page C1



THE TRAGEDY OF FLIGHT 3407

Perspectives differ on autopilot, icing

Amid probe of crash, no federal consensus for deadly problem

By JERRY ZREMSKI

NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

WASHINGTON — The nation's airline regulator says it's safe to fly some planes on autopilot in light to moderate icing.

But the nation's transportation safety watchdog warns that even "thin amounts of ice ... can be deadly" — and advises pilots to turn off the autopilot system when ice starts to gather.

So pilots have to choose which of two federal masters to serve to combat a potentially deadly problem: the accumulation of ice on an airplane.

The disagreement between the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board is one of several they have regarding icing on aircraft.

Given that the crew of Continental Connection Flight 3407 reported icing in the minutes before the plane crashed Thursday night in Clarence, killing 50, the crew's use of autopilot could end up being central to the safety board's investigation of the crash.

Pilot experience and actions also are expected to be probed, but the icing issue is key because of what aviation experts know about what happens when a plane on autopilot experiences icing.

The ice on the wings would normally cause the plane to drag, but the autopilot compensates for the drag until the system reaches a breaking point and shuts off, said Michael B. Bragg, an engineering professor who heads the University of Illinois Aircraft Icing Research Group.

Once that happens, the pilot is suddenly flying a plane that's heavier and less aerodynamic than the one that left the ground — one that may veer out of control the minute the autopilot is disengaged.

"Then the pilot becomes a test pilot," Bragg said.

The NTSB warned of that danger in a safety alert for pilots last December.

"Using the autopilot can hide changes in the handling qualities of the airplane that may be a precursor to premature stall or loss of

See **Icing** on Page A2

ON PAGE A3:

- NTSB READY TO CLOSE INVESTIGATION HERE
- WESTERN NEW YORKERS ARE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO HELP
- LIST OF VICTIMS AND PROFILES

ON BUFFALONEWS.COM:

- PASSENGERS AND CREW OF FLIGHT 3407: THEIR STORIES
- AUDIO: LAST RADIO TRANSMISSION FROM THE PLANE
- VIDEO FROM THE CRASH SCENE



John Hickey/Buffalo News
Sharon Green, center, daughter Jennifer Quimby and son Brad S. Green Jr. comfort each other.

Family touched by kindness of others

Finds solace in hugs and solidarity

By MAKI BECKER

NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Fifty victims. Fifty families — each facing the same unimaginable loss.

As the whirlwind of shock and anguish gives way to mourning, the families and loved ones of those lost in the crash of Continental Flight 3407 are finding comfort in knowing they are not alone in their heartbreak.

"Very rarely, you can look someone in the eye and say, 'I know exactly what you're going through,'" said Mike Quimby, 36, whose father-in-law, Brad S. Green Sr., was aboard the doomed turboprop. "And there's 49 other people and their families, and we can say, 'We know exactly what you're going through and we're going to go through it together.'"

His wife, and Green's daughter, Jennifer, 27, said she has found a sliver of solace in "hugging other people and saying I know what it's like to lose your daddy, because I lost my dad."

Brad Green's family met with reporters Tuesday afternoon at

See **Family** on Page A2

PRESIDENT OBAMA: "None of this will be easy. The road to recovery will not be straight."



Signature event: President Obama, accompanied by Vice President Biden, signs the stimulus bill before a cheering crowd at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in Denver on Tuesday. Story on Page A5.

GM, Chrysler ask \$14 billion in additional federal aid

By TOM KRISHER
AND KEN THOMAS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DETROIT — General Motors and Chrysler asked the government for an additional \$14 billion in aid Tuesday, a dramatic acknowledgment that conditions in the U.S. auto industry have grown significantly worse in just two months.

GM presented the government a survival plan that also calls for cutting 47,000 jobs globally by the end of this year and closing five more U.S. factories by 2012 — the largest work force reduction announced by a U.S. company during the economic downturn.

Chrysler said it will cut 3,000 more jobs and stop producing three vehicle models this year.

Meanwhile, the United Auto Workers union said it has reached a tentative agreement with Chrysler, GM and Ford

INSIDE

AREA GM DEALERS BRACE FOR CHANGES. PAGE B7

Motor Co. on modifications to labor contracts. Such concessions were also a condition of the government bailout.

GM did not identify which manufacturing plants it intends to close over the next several years. "We're not naming plants at this point in time," said Rick Wagoner, GM's chairman and chief executive officer.

But it now says its total number of U.S. assembly, powertrain and stamping plants will decline to 33 by 2012, instead of 38 as it had projected last December. It had 47 plants in 2008.

GM operates an engine plant in the Town of Tonawanda with 1,340 hourly and salaried workers.

Art Wheaton, director of labor stud-

ies at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations in Buffalo, said it is too early to know whether GM's projected plant closings could affect the Tonawanda site on River Road.

He said the company probably wouldn't make those types of decisions until it completes its negotiations with the UAW.

Still to be determined is how the Tonawanda plant will be affected by GM's previously disclosed plans to reduce its U.S. salaried work force by 3,400 jobs. The site has 201 salaried jobs.

GM verified that it is considering taking back some of Delphi Corp.'s operations. While it did not specify which sites would be included, it has been speculated that Delphi's plant in the Town of Lockport could be one of them. Delphi was spun off from GM a decade

See **Bailout** on Page A2

State investigators cite city schools over hazardous stairs at All High

By MICHAEL BEEBE

NEWS STAFF REPORTER

State labor investigators have cited the Buffalo Public Schools for the hazardous condition of the steep metal stairs at All High Stadium that caused the death last November of Buffalo News sportswriter Tom Borrelli.

Five "serious" safety violations have been leveled at the school system by the Labor Department for the ship's ladder leading to the press box located on the stadium's roof.

The News obtained the safety report

Violations

The state Labor Department cited five violations with the press box staircase at All High Stadium:

- Tread width on the press box stairs is too narrow.
- The angle of the stairway is too steep.
- No nonslip finish on the top stair.
- Substandard handrails.
- Insufficient vertical clearance at the top of the stairs.

after filing a Freedom of Information request with the state Labor Department's Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau.

The state charges were filed Jan. 16 after a state inspection of the facility behind Bennett High School on Nov. 19. Borrelli died Nov. 20.

Borrelli, 51, was covering a high school football game at the stadium Nov. 8, when he fell climbing the stairway to the press box and tumbled down the metal stairs.

See **All High** on Page A8

INDEX

In today's News: NeXt

Business TodayB7
City & RegionB1
ClassifiedC6
ComicsD8
CrosswordD7, D10
EntertainmentC4
JingoD3
Life & ArtsC1
LotteriesB2
ObituariesB4
OpinionA6
Picture PageC10
SportsD1
TelevisionC6

WEATHER

Snow mixing with rain. High temperature 38, low 31. Details on Page B12.



John Hickey/Buffalo News

Ryan Schmelzer, Peter Elliott and Simon Fedak wait for a ride at the Amherst Pepsi Center on Tuesday.

INSIDE THE NEWS

Obama OKs hike in Afghan troops

WASHINGTON — President Obama on Tuesday approved adding 17,000 U.S. troops for the flagging war in Afghanistan, his first major move to change the course of the war. About 8,000 Marines are expected to go first, followed by 4,000 soldiers and 5,000 support forces. Story on A4.

Burris' story has new twist

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Sen. Roland Burris now acknowledges attempting to raise money for ousted Gov. Rod Blagojevich — a new twist in his story about how he got the appointment from the man accused of trying to sell the seat. This led to calls for his resignation. Story on A5.

Another soldier dies of meningitis

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. — A second soldier stationed at the Army's Fort Leonard Wood has died of meningitis, officials said Tuesday. Pvt. Randy Stabnick, 28, of South Bend, Ind., died Tuesday. A 23-year-old soldier from Alabama died Feb. 9. Story on A5.

WEB SAMPLER

American Idol votes some contestants off the show tonight. Will Kendall Beard be one of them? Go to the Pop Stand blog at buffalonews.com as soon as the show ends, and join reporter Anne Neville for a chat.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

‘We feel protected and just loved’

FAMILY • from A1

Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church in Clarence — where Green and his wife, Sharon, worshipped — to share their memories and their grief.

They also offered a glimpse into what it's been like for the loved ones of those who perished in the Thursday night crash in Clarence Center.

Green, 53, of Clarence, was a district manager for Kraft Foods. He had been away at a four-day business meeting in Newark and was on his way home Thursday night.

Green wasn't even supposed to be on that plane, his family said.

"He told us they couldn't get on the flight they wanted and they had to wait for something else," Sharon Green said. He was originally scheduled to fly on another airline. "That's when they must have gotten onto Continental."

A friend of Brad S. Green Jr., 25, alerted the family to the crash.

"We put on the TV and we saw the fire," Sharon Green said. "I was just hoping, 'Dear Lord, it's not today, is it? It's not his homegoing is it?' Then we heard there were other flights in the air that could be his from Newark. And you just cling on."

They piled into their car and drove over to the Clarence Center Town Hall, which had become the command center for the crash. They were then sent to the airport, where they filled out paperwork and eventually sent home. At 2 a.m., they received a phone call confirming that Green had indeed been a passenger on the downed plane.

The man who was the rock of the Green family — a deeply religious and family-oriented man who was nicknamed "Mr. Wonderful" for his ability to fix just about anything, who was his wife's best friend and constant companion for everything from grocery shopping to trips to Tim Hortons and who was his son's fishing and hunting buddy — was gone.

Grief-stricken and in a daze, the Green family, like all of the other families, was brought to the Indigo Hotel in Amherst, where they met with representatives of the National Transportation Safety Board as well as Continental Airlines.

The NTSB gave the families special briefings, often three a day, and the families also met privately with representatives from the agency and the airline.



John Hickey/Bufalo News

From left, Brad S. Green Sr.'s family members, son-in-law Mike Quimby, daughter Jennifer Green Quimby, wife Sharon Green and son Brad S. Green Jr., appreciate kindness shown.

The Green family has been overwhelmed by the kindness and attention they have received. They said three Continental reps have been assigned just to attend to their needs.

"They are the most loving people, the most caring, wonderful people that we could ever hope to be working with us as a family," Sharon Green said of both the NTSB and airline workers.

"It's hard to think right now," said Jennifer Green Quimby, 27. "It's nice to have other people thinking for you. We're not processing things."

The Greens, like many of the other families, have spent many hours each day at the hotel. "That's our home away from home," Quimby said. "We spend almost as much time there as we do at [the Greens'] home . . . It's a safe haven. We feel protected and just loved."

They also have been moved by the enormous public outpouring since the crash.

"I've never been loved on by so many," Sharon Green said. "It's just God working through the hearts and souls of so many people."

At Tuesday morning's briefing, the Greens were touched when they found their briefing room was decorated with dozens of Valentines handmade by local school children.

"We could go up and see each one, how their little hearts are breaking for us," Sharon Green said.

At lunchtime, the family went out to a restaurant with

their Continental representatives. The manager got wind of who the family was and insisted that the meal was on the house.

"There just seems to be a lot of hospitality," Quimby said.

The Greens were grateful for the chance to visit the crash site Monday in a special trip arranged for the families and their friends.

They said the ride in the chartered buses from the hotel to the site was a somber and reverent one. Jennifer Green Quimby was struck by how many people had come for each victim. "You realize how the people the plane were so connected," she said. "The groups on the bus were in groups of 10, 11. We were nine."

The Greens noted that the scene of the crash was just a block from Marty's Restaurant, where Brad Green went at least once a day for coffee as he worked his two cell phones and laptop.

Sharon Green said when she got to the place where her husband died, all she could do was get down on her knees and pray.

Brad Green Jr. said he was surprised by how big the crash site seemed. "It looked so much bigger than in the media," he said.

But at the same time, he was struck at how limited the damage was. The aircraft struck just one house and slightly damaged two others.

Jennifer Green Quimby said she couldn't help but feel a higher power had shielded as

much of the neighborhood as possible from destruction.

The Greens didn't walk around the site. They stayed in one spot as they took in the moment. They're not sure what other families did.

"It's not a thing where you look around to see what others are doing," Sharon Green said. "It's a time of privacy in a large group, if that makes any sense."

Now, the Greens are planning a memorial service for Brad Green Sr. It will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday in Eastern Hills Wesleyan.

They hadn't received any word about his body as of Tuesday afternoon, so they haven't been able to make burial plans yet.

Sharon Green said she can't even talk about how to deal with not knowing what has happened to her husband's remains. "There aren't any words for that," she said.

They had heard that one victim had been positively identified by the medical examiner so far.

But Sharon Green said she understands that the process is difficult and will take time.

"They are treating everything with tenderness and respect," she said. "You wouldn't want haste."

Jennifer Quimby Green agreed. "They know they are our loved one," she said. "They are honoring them."

e-mail: mbecker@buffnews.com

Lobbying called factor in lack of unified policy

ICING • from A1

control," the safety board said. "Turn off or limit the use of the autopilot in order to better 'feel' changes in the handling qualities of the airplane."

Steven R. Chealander, the agency commissioner who is investigating the crash in Clarence, said this week that this doesn't mean pilots should always fly manually when icing conditions occur, or that the crew of Flight 3407 was wrong to be flying on autopilot.

It just means that flying manually can help the pilot "stay ahead of changes as a result of icing," said Chealander, who added: "The FAA sees things a little differently than we do."

Indeed, in a 2006 alert, the FAA did not specify so clearly that the autopilot should be used sparingly in icy conditions.

"Pilots should follow approved guidance for use of the autopilot," the FAA said. "If not closely monitored, the autopilot may mask dangerous airspeed losses. When ice is accumulating on the airplane, the autopilot should be disconnected at least once every five minutes."

Laura Brown, an FAA spokeswoman, said the two agencies are really not that far apart on the autopilot issue.

"Our guidance is to periodically turn off the autopilot," she said, stressing that the decision on how to fly may well vary from one aircraft to another.

"It may, in fact, be safer to fly with the autopilot," she added.

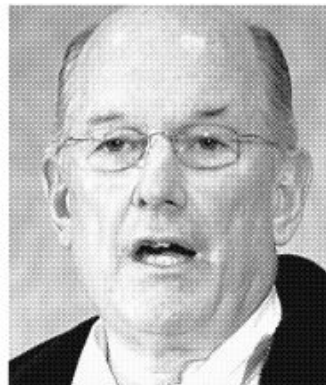
That's not the only issue on which the safety board and the FAA don't see eye to eye.

The safety board's alert last December says: "Thin amounts of ice, as little as one-quarter inch, can be deadly."

But the FAA has long certified individual planes — including the Bombardier Dash 8 Q400 that crashed in Clarence — to fly in "light to moderate icing" conditions. An FAA memo describes light icing as a quarter-inch to an inch accumulation per hour on the outer wing, while moderate icing is accumulation of 1 to 3 inches per hour.

Moreover, the FAA has not acted on several of the safety board's "most wanted transportation safety improvements" regarding aircraft icing.

Icing narrows the range of speed at which a plane can safely fly, Bragg explained. The increased drag produced by the ice both increases the mini-



Charles Lewis/Bufalo News file photo
"The FAA sees things a little differently than we do," said Steven R. Chealander, leader of the NTSB investigation.

mum speed the aircraft needs to fly in order to avoid stalling out and decreases the plane's maximum speed.

The addition of other elements that increase drag — such as the raising of the flaps or the lowering of the landing gear — can make matters worse, he said. The flaps were raised and the landing gear went down on the plane that crashed in Clarence.

If the icing is severe enough, a plane will stall — and it will be up to a suddenly surprised pilot to right a plane that's suddenly tumbling through the sky.

Not all pilots can handle it, said Jim Hall, a partner in the Nolan Law Group of Chicago and former chairman of the federal safety board.

"Many times, without the proper training, their normal instincts may put the plane in an even more difficult situation from which to recover," Hall said.

The safety board and the FAA disagree on the use of autopilot for the same reason that the two agencies have been at odds on other icing issues, Hall said: Industry interest groups lobby to stand in the way of a tougher approach.

But that may change now, said Justin T. Green, a pilot who is a partner in the aviation law firm Kreindler & Kreindler.

"This accident," Green said, "may prompt the FAA to restrict the use of autopilots in icing even further and hopefully will cause them to act on the NTSB's safety recommendations on icing."

News Staff Reporters Mary B. Pasciak and Aaron Besecker contributed to this report.
e-mail: jzremski@buffnews.com

‘Miracle on the Hudson’ hero offers sympathy to Buffalo-area residents

The man who recently became the nation's example of aviation heroism extended his sympathy toward Buffalo-area residents as they struggle to cope in the aftermath of the tragic crash of Continental Flight 3407 in Clarence Center.

Capt. Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger III, who piloted a crippled US Airways jetliner safely into a crash-landing Jan. 15 in "The Miracle on the Hudson," said he was thinking of the Buffalo area and the families who were affected by the crash.

"I am deeply saddened by last week's accident in Buffalo," said Sullenberger, who lives in Danville, Calif., "and my family and I have the families of those who lost their lives in our

hearts and in our thoughts."

When US Airways Flight 1549 crash-landed in the Hudson River off Manhattan, all 155 passengers escaped safely.

Sullenberger, 58, a former Air Force fighter pilot and an employee of US Airways since 1980, also runs a consulting company, Safety Reliability Methods, that applies safety standards from the airline industry to other businesses and professional fields. The company says its methods "have their genesis in the ultra-safe world of commercial aviation."

For the rest of their lives, Craig Nuccio, Charles Gavadin and James Best will be thankful to Frank Rader

for keeping them off doomed Flight 3407.

Nuccio, 36, of the City of Tonawanda, and Gavadin, 42, and Best, 46, both of Buffalo, are Buffalo employees of Miller Zell, an Atlanta company that makes signs and installs them on Wal-Mart stores worldwide. The three were scheduled to fly back to Buffalo on Thursday night after completing a job in Rogers, Ark.

"We were booked to fly from Arkansas to Houston, and then to Newark and home to Buffalo on [Flight 3407]," Nuccio said.

But their boss — Rader — knew the men had worked hard in Arkansas and thought that was a "crazy flight schedule." So Rader convinced the company

to arrange a new schedule of flights — with only one stop in Atlanta — that cost an extra \$150 per man but made the trip three hours shorter.

After hearing they had been booked on the plane that crashed, killing 50 people, Nuccio said he, Gavadin and Best were shaken. Friday night, they got together at Caputi's Bar on Sheridan Drive in the Town of Tonawanda.

"We all had a 'Glad to be alive' drink," Nuccio said.

On a smaller scale, the Stop the Violence Coalition knows what it's like to deal with the aftermath of death.

That's why the Buffalo-based group showed up at the Flight 3407 crash site Monday bearing 600 bottles of water,

coffee, fruit and desserts for emergency workers at the crash scene in Clarence Center.

"We're all part of Erie County," said Arlee "Joop" Daniels, who came up with the idea of a giant "care package" that bridged city-suburban boundary lines in a time of need.

Daniels, sergeant-at-arms of the anti-violence group, said the coalition's experience helping families of homicide victims made members aware of how those in the midst of a tragedy often can use a helping hand.

So the coalition tapped its emergency funds, bought the food and drink, and took it the site as "a small token" of solidarity between city and suburbs.

GM and Chrysler to reduce number of models

BAILOUT • from A1

ago.

GM said it could need up to \$30 billion from the Treasury Department, up from a previous estimate of \$18 billion. That includes \$13.4 billion previously allocated and \$9.1 billion in new loans. The world's largest automaker said it could run out of money by March without new funds.

GM's request includes a credit line of \$7.5 billion to be used if the downturn in the auto industry is more pronounced than expected. But the automaker claimed it could be profitable in two years and fully repay its loans by 2017.

Chrysler LLC requested \$5 billion in new loans on top of the \$4 billion it received in December. The company had said it might need an extra \$3 bil-

lion.

Both requests were part of restructuring plans the two automakers owed the government in exchange for earlier loans.

Ford, which borrowed billions from private sources before credit markets tightened, has said it can make it through 2009 without government help.

GM and Chrysler plan to reduce the number of models they offer to car buyers.

GM said it plans to sell or spin off its Saturn brand. If those attempts are unsuccessful, GM will phase out the brand.

GM is also evaluating options for a sale of its Hummer division and has sought buyers for its Saab unit. Selling or eliminating those brands would leave GM to focus on Chevrolet, Cadillac, GMC and Buick, with Pontiac re-

duced to one or two models.

Chrysler will eliminate the Dodge Aspen, Durango and Chrysler PT Cruiser, according to company president Jim Press.

The restructuring plans must be vetted by the Obama administration's new autos task force. In a sign the administration views the U.S. steel industry as a case study for revamping the auto industry, one of the task force's appointees played a key role in the reshaping of that industry earlier this decade.

President Obama's top spokesman told reporters aboard Air Force One on Tuesday that he wouldn't rule out bankruptcy for the Detroit automakers.

The company looked into three bankruptcy scenarios, all of which would cost the government more than \$30 billion, GM Chief Operating Offi-

cer Fritz Henderson said. The worst scenario would cost \$100 billion because GM's revenue would severely drop, he said.

The GM job cuts include 10,000 salaried and 37,000 blue-collar positions, amounting to 19 percent of its current global work force of 244,500. About 26,000 of the cuts will come from outside the United States. The cuts would take place by the end of this year.

The new plan has GM's U.S. work force declining from about 92,000 hourly and salaried employees at the end of 2008 to 72,000 by 2012.

GM's Wagoner said the plan submitted Tuesday is more aggressive than the one presented to the government on Dec. 2 because the global economy and auto sales have deteriorated since then.

Chrysler had 54,007 employees at the end of 2008, so Tuesday's 3,000

cuts would equal about 6 percent.

Chrysler said the economy and the market for new cars have deteriorated significantly since its initial request. Chrysler said it now projects that automakers will sell 10.1 million vehicles in the United States this year, the lowest level in four decades.

The UAW said discussions are continuing with the automakers regarding the union-run trust fund that will take on retiree health care expenses starting next year. Under terms of the government loans, both Chrysler and GM are required to reach concessions with the UAW and debt holders. "The changes will help these companies face the extraordinarily difficult economic climate in which they operate," UAW President Ron Gettelfinger said.

News Business Reporter Matt Glynn contributed to this story.

THE TRAGEDY
OF FLIGHT 3407

Work at crash site raises prospect of residents' return

By HENRY L. DAVIS,
LOU MICHEL AND JANICE HABUDA
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

The charred, mangled pieces of Continental Flight 3407 have been carted off by tractor-trailers. The remains of the 50 victims have almost all been recovered. The residents of Long Street in Clarence Center are awaiting word, any day now, about when they will be allowed back into their homes.

Five days after a Continental Connection flight crashed into this quiet neighborhood, a sense of normalcy is slowly beginning to return.

"In another couple of days, it will all seem like a dream, but, of course, it will never be the same for the people affected," said the Rev. Charles G. Biegner, who lives just a couple of blocks from the crash site.

The grim task of identifying the remains of the victims is expected to scale down by the end of the week at the crash site, officials said Tuesday. But giving names to all the dead



Derek Gee/Buffalo News
FBI Evidence Response Team looks for crash debris on Goodrich Road.

may take weeks as the focus of efforts now turns to the work of medical examiners and their colleagues in the morgue, said Dr. Anthony J. Billittier IV, Erie County health commissioner.

Most of the searching for human remains was expected to be completed by Tuesday night, and Billittier expressed hope that loved ones of those who died in the crash may find com-

fort in knowing that what remains could be found were recovered.

Nevertheless, some recovery efforts will continue through the end of the week, when crews are expected to begin removing soil for testing for contamination, along with more debris.

Billittier said the medical examiner at the site will remain until she is comfortable that everything possible has been done to recover the remains.

Officials have made significant progress at identification through fingerprinting, dental records and distinguishing features or personal belongings, he said. As a last resort, officials are turning to DNA testing of tissue.

In the meantime, plans are under way to allow residents who were evacuated from Long Street to move back.

"A re-entry plan for residents to return to the Long Street neighborhood is being drafted," said State Police Capt. Steven A. Nigrelli, who says the goal is to return residents to their homes this weekend.

The two brick houses on either side

of where the Wielinski family residence had stood at 6038 Long St. incurred minor structural damage, including to the windows and a garage, said David R. Metzger, Clarence's senior code-enforcement officer.

"Other than that, the worst of it is lawn damage, some spattered mud and minimal heat damage," said Metzger, who has inspected the 12 homes on the street where mandatory evacuations were conducted.

Metzger also hopes Long Street residents can return by the weekend, though he says that may be an optimistic estimate.

Many other Clarence Center families living close to the crash site voluntarily left in order to avoid the hectic scene of hundreds of emergency personnel coming and going from the site since Thursday night.

"Many left and stayed with relatives because it was just easier. They had to show their ID every time to get in the area," said Linda A. Newell, a Clarence Center Post Office clerk.

Tuesday, commotion around the crash site seemed to be winding down.

Members of an Israeli emergency response team tried to gain access to the scene Tuesday afternoon but were turned away by law enforcers.

A small contingent of media kept vigil behind the crime scene tape at Goodrich Road and Maple Street.

An FBI Evidence Recovery Team combed the lawns surrounding at least three Goodrich Road homes.

Onlookers marveled at the fact that only one house was destroyed and wondered aloud what would become of the site. Probably best left empty as a memorial, they agreed.

At about 4 p.m., pieces of construction equipment were hosed down at Maple and Long as they prepared to leave. A pair of firefighters carried a ladder back to their truck.

And throughout the sunny, blue-sky afternoon, air traffic continued above.

e-mail: hdavis@buffnews.com

Coming together amid tragedy

Residents attend services
and offer help as spirit
of fellowship aboundsBy PETER SIMON
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

The Buffalo area's collective heart is broken, and people are looking for ways — large and small — to pick up the pieces.

Pain surrounds us and cuts deep. At least 35 of the 50 people killed in the crash of Flight 3407 lived in the Buffalo area or had strong ties here. Their relatives, friends and co-workers are countless.

As of Tuesday, 10 memorial Masses for crash victims had either taken place or were scheduled at local Catholic churches. Many other services were planned at other houses of worship.

"I think it's numbing," said Kevin A. Keenan, director of communications for the Catholic Diocese of Buffalo. "There's a deep sense of sadness, reaching out to the families and praying for the victims."

More than 100 people volunteered to help with an interfaith prayer service earlier this week in a Clarence church.

They set up chairs, made coffee, passed out service leaflets and helped with voice and sound equipment. But as much as anything, they — like so many others throughout the region — were trying to keep busy, focused and helpful at a time of immense communitywide suffering.

"We were inundated with people saying: 'How can I help? What can I do?'" said Mark Nigro, executive pastor at Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church.

And the calls continued even after Monday's prayer session. People are volunteering at churches and community centers, contributing to funds for the families of those killed on Flight 3407 and baking cookies for investigators at the crash scene.

A committee is even forming to urge that the television show "Extreme Makeover" build a home for the Wielinski family, whose Clarence Center house was destroyed when the plane crashed into it Thursday night.

"I think it's stunning, numbing," said Monsignor J. Patrick Keleher, director of the Newman Center at the University at Buffalo. "Everybody knows [a victim] closely."

Nearly 2,000 people attended the interfaith service in Clarence, with some arriving more than an hour early to pray.

"It helps for people to come together when they don't know what to do for other families," said Tina Mederski of Cheektowaga.

That same spirit is evident at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church in



Derek Gee/Buffalo News
From left, Noah Haney, 9, and his cousins Drew Partsch, 9, and Nick Partsch, 6, deliver cookies to an Erie County sheriff's deputy near Flight 3407 crash site.

Clarence, where memorial Masses are planned for three victims of the crash.

"I've had many, many calls from people saying: 'What can we do?'" said Monsignor Frederick D. Leising, the pastor. "We're getting calls even from people who were complete strangers to the victims."

Buffalo is living up to its reputation as both the City of Good Neighbors and the world's biggest small town.

On just two days' notice, Buffalo's True Bethel Baptist Church put together a choir of nearly 100 congregants to sing at the service in Clarence. As many as 20 of the participants were not members of the regular choir but wanted to help out and be part of the healing process, said the Rev. Darius G. Pridgen, True Bethel's pastor.

When emergency vehicles recently approached on traffic-clogged Maple Road in Amherst, motorists pulled over to clear the center lanes without the slightest hesitation, Keleher said.

University at Buffalo President John B. Simpson said Tuesday that spirit has prevailed since the first emergency crews responded to the crash.

"I understand now that one of the things that distinguishes our community

here in Western New York is the proximity of people to one another — the seemingly small number of degrees of separation between neighborhoods, families and friends," he told about 150 people at a remembrance ceremony on UB's North Campus in Amherst.

"And so this is who we are today: neighborhoods, families, friends and colleagues, sitting together to remember and reflect for a while."

Much of that reflection centers around the fragility of life. Jolted by that realization, many people are making sure to give family members kisses and hugs and to voice their affection, several religious leaders said.

People are also searching for meaning, and Leising will try to offer some direction at the three memorial Masses he will celebrate for crash victims.

"The larger question that people have is: Why is life like this?" he said. "People look for a framework for trying to understand what's going on. In Christianity, we know dying doesn't mean we cease to be. We don't exhaust life here."

e-mail: psimon@buffnews.com

In memoriam



RONALD DAVIDSON'S infectious laugh was well-known to the six residents at the adult group home where he worked and to the regulars at the community kitchen in Westfield where he volunteered serving hot lunches.

His wife, **LINDA**, 61, was known for her kind nature as a longtime nurse at Westfield Memorial Hospital.

More than 200 friends and family of the Westfield couple gathered Sunday in St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Westfield to remember them as proud grandparents and dedicated volunteers.

The couple were together on Flight 3407 on a return trip from visiting their daughter, Carrie, in California.

The loss of two Westfield residents has hit the small Chautauqua County community hard.

"There's not enough that you can say. It's such a tragedy in the town," said Beth Powers, director of the Westfield Community Kitchen, where the Davidsons volunteered. "Everyone just felt a big hole, a big void."

Ronald Davidson, 66, who drove a "fire engine red" convertible in the summer, worked in the steel industry for years, Powers said. When that industry changed, he retrained and took a job at an adult group home in Portland run by Aspire of Western New York.

Thomas A. Sy, Aspire's executive director, said workers remember him for his great sense of humor and for forging genuine relationships with the developmentally disabled residents in the home.

Both Davidsons volunteered at the community kitchen. He helped

serve lunches on Thursdays. She would work once a month to take the blood pressure of those eating.

"She was wonderful," Powers said. "Where Ron was so loud and boisterous, Linda was really quiet. She knew how to have fun, but she was just a nice, nice person who would do anything for you."

The Davidsons have three children, Andrew, Aaron and Carrie. Aaron is in the military, stationed overseas, and arrived in Westfield on Monday.

"Their grandchildren were their life," Powers said. "They took care of them. They took them to school every day; picked them up."

— Denise Jewell Gee

JULIE RIES, 49, a nurse, died just a couple of miles from her Clarence home when Continental Flight 3407 fell from the sky. She had been visiting a friend in Newark, N.J., and was flying back to rejoin her

children and mother, a neighbor said.

"She was a lovely woman," said Waldo Plaisted, who lives across the street from the family's home off Country

Road and watched Ries grow up. "She was her own person. Very independent."

Robert Nolan, another neighbor, said she was "very very sweet." And it was hard to cope with the fact that she was so near her family again when her plane went down.

"To be so close," he said. "It's tough."

Ries is survived by her son Shawn; two daughters, Emily and Kelly; her mother, Adele Goergen; and five brothers, Richard, Donald, Mark, Gregory and Grail Cammarata.

— Nikki Cervantes

INVENTORY CLEANUP & CLEARANCE

10% OFF

Our already discounted sale prices
February 11th - 21st

NOTHING IS HELD BACK!

Manufacturer Reps here February 19th & 20th

PHILIPPS BROS. SUPPLY, INC. Construction and Industrial Supplies
2525 Kensington Ave. • Amherst, N.Y. 14226-4999
716-839-4800 • CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-888-7271
Check out our website at www.Phillipsbros.com

Victims of an air disaster

The following people are confirmed victims of the Flight 3407 crash Thursday in Clarence. These names have come from a partial flight manifest from the airline plus a variety of sources, including friends and family.

Mary Abraham of West Seneca
George Abu-Karem of Israel
David Berner of Pendleton
Linda Davidson of Westfield
Ron Davidson of Westfield
Alison Des Forges of Buffalo
Beverly Eckert of Stamford, Conn., formerly of Amherst
John Fiore of Grand Island
Ronald Gonzalez of New Brunswick, N.J.
Brad Green of Clarence
Zhaofang Guo of Amherst
Steve Johnson, Northrop Gruman employee
Kevin Johnston of East Amherst
Ellyce Kausner of Clarence
Ruth Harel Katz
Nicole Korczykowski of New York City, formerly of Eden.

Jerome Krasuski of Cheektowaga
Brian Kuklewicz of Cheektowaga
Beth Ann Kushner of Angola
Sean Lang of Montgomeryville, Pa.
Madeline Loftus of Parsippany, N.J.
Lorin Maurer of Princeton, N.J.
Don McDonald of Fort Erie, Ont.
Coleman Mellett of East Brunswick, N.J.
Dawn Monachino of Clarence
Dawn Mossop of Bloomfield, N.J.
Donald Mossop of Bloomfield, N.J.
Shawn Mossop of Bloomfield, N.J.
Jennifer Neill of Clarence
Gerry Niewood of Glen Ridge, N.J.
Johnathan Perry of New York City
Mary "Belle" Pettys of West Seneca
Flight attendant Donna Prisco, of Randolph, N.J.

Flight attendant Matilda Quintero of Woodbridge, N.J.
Ferris Reid of Bloomfield, N.J.
Pilot Marvin Dean Renslow of Lutz, Fla.
Julie Ries of Amherst
John G. Roberts III of India, a Lewiston native
Kristin Safran of Bradford, Pa.
First flight officer Rebecca Shaw of Maple Valley, Wash.
Jean Srncet of Clifton, N.J.
Darren Tolsma of Lancaster
Susan Wehle of Amherst
Ernest West of Clarence
Douglas Wielinski of Clarence
Shibin Yao, of China, working in Manhattan
Clay Yarber of Riverside, Calif.
Capt. Joseph Zuffoletto of Jamestown

Are you controlling your
DIABETES...

Do you suffer from type 2 diabetes and have trouble controlling your blood sugar levels even with the help of diet and exercise, with or without medication? You may want to consider participating in EMERGE— an international clinical research study exploring an investigational medication for type 2 diabetes.

You may be eligible if you:

- Are at least 18 years of age
- Have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes
- Have uncontrolled blood sugar levels even with the help of a healthy diet and exercise, with or without medication
- Have not taken insulin for longer than 1 week during the past 6 months

To learn more about this study, visit www.emergediabetes.com or call (toll-free) 866-917-2342



or is it controlling YOU?

THE BUFFALO NEWS

CENTRAL EDITION

Copyright 2009

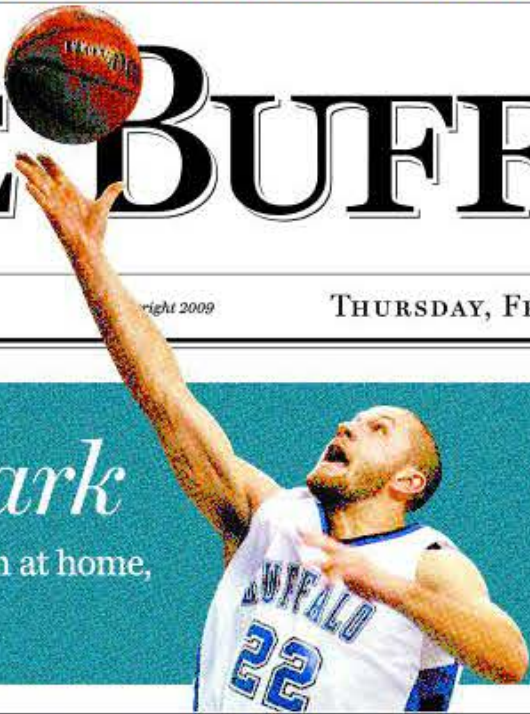
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2009

Serving Western New York since 1880

60 PAGES • 50 CENTS

Off the mark

UB loses to Bowling Green at home, 59-48. Page D1



STEALING SCENES

Viola Davis had a small part that earned her an Academy Award nomination. Page C1



THE TRAGEDY OF FLIGHT 3407

Possibility of pilot error investigated

Settings for autopilot, reaction to emergency among issues in crash

By JERRY ZREMSKI

NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

WASHINGTON — Federal investigators probing the crash of Continental Connection Flight 3407 are focusing on possible pilot error — both before and after the plane lost control and crashed into a home in Clarence Center last Thursday night, killing 50 people.

The National Transportation Safety Board confirmed Wednesday that investigators are looking into whether the plane's autopilot was programmed correctly before the plane lost control. Other sources said investigators question whether the pilot later mishandled his attempt to right the plane's course.

Federal officials caution that it is far too soon to determine any blame in the accident, and independent aviation experts cast doubt on whether any pilot could have saved the plane

See **Investigation** on Page A2



Derek Gee/Buffalo News

Wreckage from Flight 3407's fuselage is on a flatbed trailer for removal from the crash site on Long Street in Clarence Center, where the virtually intact tail section has been dismantled before being taken away today.

Typical weeknight at home instantly turned into tragedy

Plane crash tore apart family on ground

By CHARITY VOGEL

NEWS STAFF REPORTER

It had been a typical weeknight for the Wielinskis.

Karen Wielinski, 57, was watching TV in the living room of the family's modest house on Long Street in Clarence Center.

Daughter Jill, 22, was also watching a TV show, in an upstairs bedroom.

Doug Wielinski, 61, was elsewhere in the house. What he was doing, in those final moments, no one knows, nor will ever know.

In an instant, without warning, the Wielinskis' normal life shattered.

First there was the loud noise of a plane overhead; then a tremendous crash.

The next thing Karen knew, she recalls, the house was "on top" of her.

She knew she needed to find her daughter. She tried to think clearly and to stay calm. But there were dense smoke and flames all around — and she began to panic.

At that moment, Karen saw "a hole with light." She crawled toward it, wondering what was happening to her husband and daughter.



The family provided this photo of Karen and Doug Wielinski for the Web site of the Clarence School District, where Karen is a secretary.

Far away in the chaos, Jill had also seen a small glimmer of light. She crawled toward it. Mother and daughter spotted each other in the smoke and fire, and "Karen grabbed Jill's arm and wouldn't let her go," said a family friend, Susan Muchow, who related Karen's story to The Buffalo News on behalf of the grieving woman, who did not feel she had the strength to do it herself.

"They managed to escape. They were outside, and that's when Karen screamed, 'Help my daughter!'" Mu-

See **Family** on Page A2

Pot issue possible in Lynch case

Gun charge main problem for Bills star at present

By ALLEN WILSON

NEWS SPORTS REPORTER

Gun charges may not be the only legal entanglement for Buffalo Bills running back Marshawn Lynch.

The Culver City (Calif.) Police Department said Wednesday that marijuana was discovered in the 2006 Mercedes-Benz that Lynch and two other men occupied last week when he was arrested on possession of a loaded firearm in public.

According to officers on the scene, the car was approached because it was still running while



Marshawn Lynch appears in this Culver City, Calif., police mug shot.

parked and didn't have proper license plates.

"The officers said they knocked on the window of the car and someone unrolled the window. They identified three people in the car and there was the smell of marijuana coming from the car," police Capt. Dave Tankenson said. "The officers had the occupants exit the car so they could further investigate to see if there was any marijuana in the car. What they found were four, not marijuana cigarettes, but what they call blunts or swisher sweets that appeared to contain marijuana in them."

According to Tankenson, the officers did not know who was smoking marijuana or who it belonged to. No drug charges were filed.

Tankenson said the loaded gun was found during the search, and the officers determined the

See **Lynch** on Page A2

A taste of history / Training at the fort



Charles Lewis/Buffalo News

New recruits: Marissa Mattice, 10, of Niagara Falls, right, breaks into a laugh while participating in an infantry drill at the Old Fort Niagara Winter Camp for Kids held Wednesday in Youngstown.

INDEX

Business TodayB7
City & RegionB1
ClassifiedD6
ComicsC6
CrosswordD6, D9
EntertainmentC8
JingoD3
Life & ArtsC1
LotteriesB2
ObituariesB4
OpinionA8
Picture PageD10
SportsD1
TelevisionC4

WEATHER

Snow showers, windy. High temperature 30, low 21. Details on Page B12.



James P. McCoy/Buffalo News

Michael Freedman walks to his car in the rain Wednesday in Kenmore.

INSIDE THE NEWS

Pelosi and pope meet in Vatican

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI met Wednesday with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a prominent Catholic politician who backs abortion rights. He told her that Catholic lawmakers have a duty to protect life "at all stages of its development." Story on A4.

Holder portrays 'nation of cowards'

WASHINGTON — Eric Holder, the first black attorney general, told Justice Department employees marking Black History Month that America was "a nation of cowards" on matters of race, with most avoiding candid discussions of racial issues. Story on A7.

Clinton reaches out to Indonesians

JAKARTA, Indonesia — U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton told Indonesians on Wednesday that she wanted to open a "robust partnership" with their country, President Obama's boyhood home, and sign a Southeast Asian treaty. Story on A3.



WEB SAMPLER

Ever wonder about what is the top news story in the history of Buffalo? Go to the Matters of Opinion blog at buffalonews.com for one man's list, and to nominate your choices.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Emphasis on ownership will stabilize neighborhoods

MORTGAGES • from A1

“This is specifically intended to help people who are in homes and want to stay there,” said Kathleen Lynch of the Western New York Law Center, a group active in counseling foreclosure victims.

To hear Lynch talk, many of these people are low-income wage earners who fell behind in their monthly payments and are now at risk of losing their homes.

Some of them are people who lost their jobs or became seriously ill. Some are people who bought homes they never could afford.

Their one common trait? Without help from the government, they will probably lose their homes.

“The plan seems to target foreclosures in a sensible way,” Lynch said. “It aims to assist homeowners facing foreclosure while also contemplating the impact on neighborhoods and taxpayers.”

Lynch said the emphasis on homeowners, not speculators or flippers, will help stabilize homeownership here and in turn help strengthen Buffalo’s neighborhoods.

She also likes Obama’s reliance on cash incentives so lenders will work with at-risk borrowers to modify their loans before they reach the foreclosure stage.

The incentives will encourage a lender to cut a homeowner’s monthly mortgage payment to a sustainable level. That level is defined as no more than 31 percent of the homeowner’s in-

come.

By providing a cash incentive, government is essentially absorbing some of the lender’s losses.

“My clients want to stay in their homes,” said Carol Brent, a staff attorney at Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled or Disadvantaged of Western New York. “We have a very different foreclosure problem here, and I think the president’s program will help.”

Aaron Bartley of PUSH Buffalo, a West Side group active in housing issues, says Obama’s strategy is “a long time in coming” and represents sure progress.

The problem, in Bartley’s eyes, is that the strategy doesn’t go far enough in dealing with Buffalo’s more serious housing crisis.

“We know there are thousands of houses that already are foreclosed and

vacant,” he said. “Obviously, that part of our crisis is not going to be addressed.”

The other question is whether the incentives Obama plans to offer lenders will be offered to private lenders not currently regulated by the federal government.

And even if they are, Bartley and Clarke wonder if the incentives are enough to get the region’s predatory lenders on board with the idea that local mortgages need to be modified and reduced.

A recent study by the Western New York Law Center found 44 percent of the mortgages made here from 2001 through 2006 involved lenders who do not face the same level of federal regulation as banks and other mortgage lenders.

And the people taking out those

loans are not just low-income, inner-city families. They also include middle-class homeowners in Amherst, Hamburg, Evans and every other suburban community.

“We have a lot of unregulated lending going on, and that will continue to be a problem,” said Clarke.

The Obama plan has a second component that also could prove useful to local homeowners in trouble.

Right now, a large number of local homeowners who receive their mortgages through Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac cannot refinance their mortgages at lower rates.

Under Obama’s plan, those restrictions would be limited.

e-mail: pfairbanks@buffnews.com

Colgan Air defends the training and experience of its pilots

INVESTIGATION • from A1

once it spun out of control at the relatively low altitude.

But sources said it is possible that fatal mistakes were made.

Asked if the pilot had been operating the autopilot in the improper mode, NTSB spokesman Keith Holloway said: “We haven’t definitely determined that yet. But that discussion has come up.”

The NTSB and the Federal Aviation Administration disagree on the use of autopilot during the sort of icy conditions that occurred the night of the crash, with the safety agency urging pilots to refrain from its use in the worst winter weather.

But the concern raised Wednesday about how the autopilot was operated is a separate issue — and one that has come up again and again in other accident and incident investigations.

A law textbook called “Aircraft Accident Reconstruction and Investigation” lists 14 incidents in which the au-

ON BUFFALONEWS.COM
To comment on this story, go to [THE INSIDE THE NEWS BLOG](#).

topilot was wrongly used or improperly monitored. In one case, the plane overshot the runway and two people were killed. In another, the pilot programmed the wrong speed into the system, prompting a fatal crash.

Many planes have several different autopilot modes, and the mode the pilot chooses and how he or she programs the device is hugely important, aviation experts said.

“It can make all the difference in the world,” said M.P. Papadakis, a retired airline pilot with 23,500 flight hours and a lawyer who wrote the textbook chapter that details improper use of the autopilot.

However, it is difficult to know exactly what might have happened on Flight 3407 without details of that aircraft’s autopilot system, Papadakis added. The plane’s manufacturer,

Bombardier, did not respond to a request for a description of the plane’s autopilot system.

Investigators are looking not only into the use of the autopilot system, but also into the actions of the plane’s crew once the autopilot was shut off and the plane lost control.

Sources familiar with the investigation said that as the plane descended, an automatic stall warning sounded. According to a computerized recreation of the flight’s final seconds, that could have prompted the pilot to add power to try to raise the plane’s nose.

The trouble is, the proper procedure would have been to push the plane’s nose lower to increase the speed. But by trying to raise the plane’s nose and holding the controls there, the pilot might have ensured that the plane’s speed slowed to the point where it experienced an aerodynamic stall.

The Wall Street Journal first reported that scenario Tuesday.

“They said that we’re looking at the pilot’s actions, and it’s one of many

things we’re looking at,” said NTSB spokesman Terry Williams. “We’re still in the very early stages of this investigation.”

Capt. Marvin D. Renslow, 47, piloted Flight 3407. He began flying the Bombardier Dash 8 Q400 in December, having switched from another airplane. First Officer Rebecca Lynne Shaw, 24, had flown 774 hours in the Dash 8 Q400.

Noting that Renslow had 3,379 hours of total flight experience and the highest level of pilot certification available, Colgan Air defended its pilots’ training and qualifications.

“Our crew training programs meet or exceed the regulatory requirements for all major airlines,” the airline said in a statement. “Our ground and air training is designed in coordination with the aircraft manufacturer, one of the most respected providers of aviation flight training, and the Federal Aviation Administration utilizing state-of-the-art training devices such as full-motion simulators, among others.”

Independent aviation experts ques-

tioned whether any pilot would have been able to save the plane and its passengers, given that it was only 1,650 feet above the ground when it spun out of control.

“It depends on how deep the stall is, and whether you’ve got a good, clean ice-free aircraft, said Papadakis, who added that “this plane wasn’t ‘clean’ ” because the crew reported seeing an ice buildup on its wings.

That being the case, “the plane is probably unrecoverable at that point,” said Kirk Koenig, president of Expert Aviation Consulting of Indianapolis and a commercial pilot for 25 years.

“A perfect airplane on a perfect day is probably recoverable” if it loses control at that altitude, Koenig said. “But not in the conditions they were in.”

News Staff Reporter Lou Michel contributed to this report.
e-mail: jzremski@buffnews.com

She says husband’s love led her to safety

FAMILY • from A1

chow said.

It was 10:20 last Thursday night — a moment forever engraved on the hearts of the Wielinskis, and in the memories of Western New Yorkers.

Karen and Jill Wielinski had escaped the impossible: the thundering force of a Continental Connection plane, Flight 3407, that had come crashing out of a dark night sky and onto the roof of their house in the quiet suburb of Clarence.

The two women escaped with minor injuries. Doug Wielinski died in the disaster.

To observers, the Wielinski family’s story seems shocking, almost unbelievable.

Karen Wielinski shares that reaction. But she also has a different view of it.

She believes the family’s experience is a testament to the enduring power of love — the love that bound them together, and the love she and Doug shared.

She believes that the light she and Jill followed to safety was Doug’s spirit — his love, guiding her through the flames and rubble.

“That was Doug’s love for her,” said another close friend of the family, “leading her out. We believe that.”

A joyful family

Love had led the way for Doug and Karen Wielinski before.

Karen Schoenwetter had grown up in the city, attending St. Mary of Sorrows School, then Bishop McMahon High School, where she graduated in the Class of 1969.

Doug Wielinski was a Western New York native, too, who earned his bachelor’s degree in chemistry from the

ON PAGE A6:
• PLANE’S TAIL SECTION TO BE MOVED FROM SITE TODAY. [PAGE A6](#)
• MORE THAN 1,100 GATHER TO REMEMBER BELOVED CANTOR. [PAGE A6](#)
ON BUFFALONEWS.COM:
• AUDIO REPORTS, VIDEO AND PHOTO GALLERIES OF THE CRASH
• SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AT [THE INSIDE THE NEWS BLOG](#)

University at Buffalo in 1969 and went on to get his master’s degree in chemistry at Niagara University.

Doug served in the Army during the Vietnam War. He was shipped overseas to Vietnam on his birthday, July 13, in the summer after his college graduation.

After his discharge, the couple met at a baseball game where Doug was playing with a Buffalo team. One of Karen’s cousins had told her there were two cute guys on the team.

She showed up, took one look, and declared, “I want the one with the mustache.” That was Doug.

They were married on May 19, 1979. Four children were born: all girls, which Karen delighted in. The couple loved their family and being together, friends recalled.

The Wielinskis moved to Ohio while their children were younger and lived for a time in Miami Township in Clermont County. They sent their kids to a local Catholic school and were popular in the community, reported WCPO-TV in Cincinnati.

“A wonderful family. They were great parishioners. Very involved,” a parish official at St. Columba in Miami told the Cincinnati station. “They were very excited to move back to New York to be with their family.”

Eight years ago, the family moved

back to the Buffalo area. Karen took a job in the Clarence Central Schools office, where she is a secretary. Doug worked as a marketing manager for Luvata in Buffalo, formerly known as Outokumpu American Brass.

In 2003, they bought the house at 6038 Long St. — hoping to see it filled with happy family memories, parties, Doug’s collections and the laughter of grandchildren.

“Karen and Doug were an extraordinary couple,” said a friend of the family, who asked not to be named in order to keep attention on the Wielinskis. “They were very much in love with each other. Their life focused around each other, and their children.”

Two of their daughters still lived at home: Jill and Kimberly. Jessica lives in the Town of Monroe; Lori, in Cincinnati.

The family was busily planning the weddings of two daughters when the crash came.

The couple’s interests

Each of the Wielinskis was known in the community for special interests.

Karen Wielinski is a member of the Clarence Women’s Club and the group’s past president.

She helped run card parties that served as fundraisers for the club, for its scholarship program, which sees that six seniors at Clarence High School receive \$500 scholarships to college, recalled an associate from the club, Sylvia Hair.

“She was full of fun,” Hair said. “Really full of fun, and really very dedicated. She would help out anywhere — in the kitchen, selling tickets, getting the gifts together, whatever needed to be done. Just to make things run smoothly.”

And Doug was known for his love of history and historical memorabilia.



Derek Gee/Buffalo News
Police vehicles escort the Wielinski family after they visited the site where Flight 3407 crashed into their home, killing husband and father Doug.

He was passionate about collecting sports items and artifacts relating to Buffalo’s history.

At Antique World in Clarence, Doug was a familiar face on Sunday at 6 a.m. — his favorite time for browsing the tables and booths of mementos.

“Every Sunday morning, rain or shine, snow or sleet, he was like the mailman,” said John Stall, who has sold antiques in Clarence since 1970. “He would be there at 6 a.m., right when we’d open. He’d look for his sports memorabilia. He loved the Yankees, the old Bisons, the Bills. He collected Sabres, too. You couldn’t have met a better person than Doug. He was a real gentleman. If he couldn’t make it the following Sunday, he’d tell us: ‘I’m not going to be here next Sunday.’”

Doug had a generous heart, people who knew him said.

Around the holidays, he would slip into the hands of friends a little present — maybe a \$5 gift card for Tim Hortons.

Doug Wielinski will be remembered in a memorial service at 10 a.m. Saturday in Clarence Middle School on Greiner Road.

His widow, Karen, who has been staying out of sight with her family, plans to attend.

The Wielinski family toured the site of their former home Wednesday, escorted by police.

State Police Capt. Steven A. Nigrelli said Karen Wielinski was composed during her 20-minute visit to the plot of land that had once been her home.

In the meantime, Karen’s friends have joined forces to get their friend — who has been left with nothing — some basic possessions to get her and Jill through these difficult days. Clothing, purses, some groceries — even a pair of earrings, just so that mother and daughter have a few personal items for themselves.

“Karen wants Doug to be remembered,” said Muchow, the close friend. “Karen and Doug were more than husband and wife. They were best friends.”

News Staff Reporter Lou Michel contributed to this report.
e-mail: cvogel@buffnews.com

Officer feels confident weapons charge will be prosecuted by DA

LYNCH • from A1

weapon, which is not registered, belonged to Lynch.

Meanwhile, Culver City police expect Lynch to be formally charged with possessing a loaded firearm in public by the end of the week. The case is now in the hands of the Los Angeles County district attorney’s office, which will decide whether probable cause exists to file a formal complaint against Lynch.

“Having reviewed the report,

I think there is more than enough reason to believe that will happen,” said Culver City police Lt. Dean Williams. “But it is [the district attorney’s] decision.” Williams added that the marijuana is a separate issue from the gun charge.

“Lynch was arrested for the possession of the gun, and that’s what he will likely be charged with,” Williams said. “All of the other issues are off the table right now because decisions have to be made in regards to the other parties in the

car.”

Williams described Lynch’s arrest as “run of the mill, routine” for Culver City, an affluent section of Los Angeles where Sony Pictures (formerly MGM Studios) is located. He said the local police have arrested numerous sports figures and celebrities on a variety of charges.

Williams added that the first two officers on the scene didn’t know who Lynch was until a third officer arrived and identified him. Williams insists Lynch wasn’t targeted because he’s Af-

rican-American or because he and his companions were sitting in an expensive car.

“A Mercedes-Benz is a dime a dozen around here,” Williams said. “We wouldn’t arrest someone if we didn’t believe it was justified. Knowing these officers and having read the report, I think the district attorney is going to file this case without blinking an eye.”

Lynch’s California-based lawyer, M. Gerald Schwartzbach, wouldn’t go into details of the case because he has yet to

see a copy of the police report.

Schwartzbach is, however, dismayed by the Culver City Police Department’s decision to release information on the case.

“I’m not certain what would be the motivation for somebody to release that information when they are not providing a police report to Marshawn’s attorney,” Schwartzbach said. “He wasn’t arrested for [marijuana], and I don’t anticipate him being charged for it.”

The Bills and NFL are declining to comment while the

legal process continues. But NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell has taken a tough stance on repeat offenders.

Lynch was involved in a hit-and-run on Chippewa Street in May and didn’t admit being the driver until several weeks later. He eventually pleaded guilty to a lesser charge and paid a \$100 fine. As a result of the latest issue, Lynch could face a multi-game suspension for violating the NFL’s player conduct policy.

e-mail: awilson@buffnews.com

THE BUFFALO NEWS

CENTRAL EDITION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2009

Serving Western New York since 1880

68 PAGES • 50 CENTS



JEFF MIERS
Tough times demand top tunes. Gusto

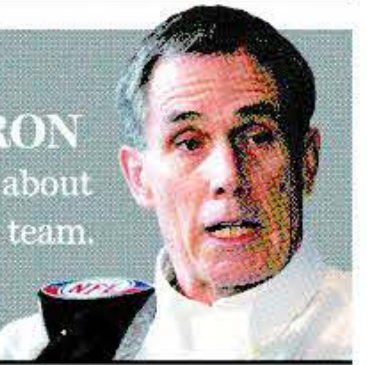


Flashy dressers

Metallics shine brightest at New York Fashion Week.
Page C1

JAWING WITH JAURON

Bills coach talks about issues facing the team.
Page D1



THE TRAGEDY OF FLIGHT 3407

"This weekend will probably be the toughest as families return and resume their lives on Long Street."



David Bissonette, Clarence town emergency services coordinator, said parts from Flight 3407 were found for "an undisclosed, secure location."

Derek Gee/Buffalo News

Icing looms large as causal factor

'Eerie' parallel to '94, when a crash killed 68

By JERRY ZREMSKI

NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

WASHINGTON — Pilots, aviation accident attorneys and the survivors of a previous plane crash worry that the late crew of Continental Flight 3407 is being unfairly blamed for a crash that cost 50 lives when icy weather might be the real culprit.

"Icing absolutely is playing some kind of role in this thing," said Kirk Koenig, president of Expert Aviation Consulting of Indianapolis and a commercial pilot for 25 years. "It's very convenient and easy to go blame the pilot."

Meanwhile, pilot and aviation accident attorney Justin T. Green of the Kreindler & Kreindler law firm said:

ON PAGE A5:

- ARE TRAVELERS AFRAID TO FLY IN TURBOPROP PLANES?
- RELIGIOUS FRINGE GROUP TO PICKET MEMORIAL SERVICES

ON BUFFALONEWS.COM:

- TOLLING THE LOSS OF FLIGHT 3407 IN SOUND AND PICTURES

"Once again, we have a twin-engine propeller aircraft going down in what appears to be icing."

Jennifer Stansberry Miller, part of a group connected to victims of a similar crash in Indiana 15 years ago, said: "In our accident, they tried to blame the pilot, as well" — only to discover, at the end of the investigation, that icing played a key role.

The National Transportation Safety Board on Thursday offered no new clues into the crash of the turboprop

See **Icing** on Page A2

Last pieces of plane gone, but scar remains

By LOU MICHEL

NEWS STAFF REPORTER

You wouldn't know there had been a plane crash.

A terrible house fire, yes, from the pungent odor of burned building material and the sight of heavy equipment doing cleanup Thursday afternoon.

But to think 50 people perished there in a blazing inferno a week ago seemed unfathomable.

By Sunday, when residents are expected to reclaim their homes on Clarence Center's Long Street, there will be a carpet of gray, crushed stone, where the Wielin-

ski family house had stood before Flight 3407 crashed into it last Thursday.

By spring, the stone will be shoveled up and replaced with fresh topsoil.

"In the better weather, we'll do the final grade and seed it," said David Metzger, Clarence's code enforcement officer, who stood attentively watching as some two dozen construction workers removed debris and what was once the concrete basement walls of the Wielinski home.

The workers labored beneath a

See **Site** on Page A2

Makowski expected to resign as justice

State is probing tie to friend's DWI case

By PATRICK LAKAMP
AND GENE WARNER

NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

Joseph G. Makowski is expected to resign his seat as a State Supreme Court justice — possibly in the next few days — amid a state judicial investigation and a potential grand jury probe of written claims he made trying to clear a friend in a drunken-driving case, several legal sources have told The Buffalo News.

For at least three months, the State Commission on Judicial Conduct has been asking local law enforcement officials what they know about the affidavit Makowski signed after the Sept. 2 DWI arrest of former prosecutor Anne E. Adams.

Makowski filed that affidavit as a witness after having been with Adams in the hours before her arrest. In that statement, dated Sept. 11, Makowski repeatedly stated that nothing in Adams' behavior suggested she couldn't drive safely home from a downtown Buffalo restaurant that night.

Several witnesses, though, have given authorities statements that suggest Adams showed obvious signs of being intoxicated, both in her manner and in her driving.

Adams was charged with aggravated DWI, accused of having a blood-alcohol content of 0.19 percent at the time of her arrest. That's more than twice the state's legal limit.

A call to Makowski's attorney, Joel L.

See **Makowski** on Page A2



Justice Joseph G. Makowski

\$10 fee proposed for filing state tax returns

Charge would apply to paper submissions

By RICK KARLIN

ALBANY TIMES UNION

ALBANY — Gov. David A. Paterson's proposals to tax nondiet soda, iTunes downloads and even haircuts are well known. But did you know he also wants to tax your tax filings?

Tucked into the governor's proposed budget proposal for the coming fiscal year is a plan to levy a \$10 fee for state income tax returns that are filed on paper rather than electronically. State budget officials say the paper fil-

ing fee could generate \$6.8 million during the next fiscal year.

The plan would waive the fee for those with annual earnings of less than \$15,000 for individuals or \$30,000 for couples.

The filing fee requires the Legislature's approval.

Even with the income-based waiver, the plan has drawn fire from those who say it would hit low-income and older New Yorkers — the groups most likely to file paper returns.

"There are a lot of elderly people out there who are not into computers," said State Sen. Hugh Farley, R-Niskayuna, who already has heard constituent complaints.

"It's just one of a number of [pro-

posed taxes] that we should ditch," said Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestri, D-Cohoes.

Democrats have been pushing to raise income taxes on the wealthy rather than adopt new broad-based sources of revenue, such as the paper filing fee.

The push to increase e-filing has caused other headaches.

Librarians across the state complained that droves of people have asked for paper returns. That means they have had to run off endless copies.

In addition to the almost absurdist aspect of a tax on taxation, the proposal has led critics to wonder if the state has taken liberties in the way it promotes

See **Tax** on Page A2

O Canada / Presidential trip



Associated Press

All smiles: President Obama is saluted by Royal Canadian Mounted Police as he arrives Thursday in Ottawa for a visit focused on trade, the environment and the economy. It was his first foreign trip as president. Story on Page A4.

INDEX

In today's News: Gusto

Business TodayD6
City & RegionD1
ClassifiedD6
ComicsC6
CrosswordD6, D10
Home & StyleC1
JingoC2
LotteriesB2
ObituariesB4
OpinionA6
Picture PageC8
SportsD1
TelevisionC4

WEATHER

Mostly cloudy, windy, snow showers. High temperature 24, low 19. Details on Page B10.



Sharon Cantillon/Buffalo News

Ken Brenner cleans off a mortar mixer at an Elmwood Avenue construction site on a chilly, windy Thursday.

INSIDE THE NEWS

FBI agents find Texas financier

WASHINGTON — Texas financier R. Allen Stanford was found Thursday in Virginia, where FBI agents served him with legal papers in an \$8 billion fraud that lured investors with promises of improbable high returns on certificates of deposit and other investments.
Story on A4.

Argentina ousts bishop over denials

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — The bishop whose Holocaust denials damaged the Vatican was ordered Thursday to leave Argentina, where he ran a seminary. The Interior Ministry said his denials "insult Argentine society, the Jewish community and all of humanity."
Story on A3.

Iraq shoe tosser seeks clemency

BAGHDAD — The journalist who threw his shoes at former President George W. Bush pleaded for clemency as his trial began Thursday, saying he had been blinded with rage when he saw Bush smiling and joking with the Iraqi prime minister at a Dec. 14 news conference.
Story on A3.



WEB SAMPLER

Editorial Page Editor Mike Vogel, a news buff from way back, has come up with a list of the top 36 news stories in Buffalo history. Agree or disagree? Go to the Matters of Opinion blog at buffalonews.com and tell us what you think.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Grand jury expected to investigate Makowski, Adams

MAKOWSKI • from A1

Daniels, was not returned.

An Erie County grand jury is expected to investigate both Makowski and Adams, probably sometime in the next couple of weeks, legal sources have said. That probe, of course, would be called off if any plea deals are made in the case.

A plea deal that might result in a misdemeanor admission by Makowski probably would not save his seat on the bench, legal sources say. But such a deal could keep him from being permanently disbarred. Any decision on disbarment would be made by an attorneys grievance committee, an arm of the State Appellate Division.

Such a plea deal also could end the Commission on Judicial Conduct probe.

The commission has jurisdiction

over 3,400 judges and justices of the state Unified Court System. It investigates about 1,500 complaints per year and recommends a wide range of actions against any jurists found guilty of misconduct through formal hearings.

Adams' former attorney had filed the judge's signed statement as part of a motion to dismiss the DWI case against her in Town of Hamburg Court. That attorney eventually withdrew that motion.

"Ms. Adams has a 20-year, high-profile career as both a prosecutor and defense attorney," Makowski wrote in his affidavit. "She also holds a full-time faculty position at UB Law School. These charges, even if resulting in an acquittal, would seriously damage her reputation in the community and future professional prospects. For these reasons, I believe a dismissal in the interests of justice is warranted."

Investigators are studying the fol-

lowing possible discrepancies between Makowski's affidavit and witnesses' statements to authorities, according to sources close to the case:

- "When we left the restaurant, I walked Ms. Adams to her car," the affidavit states. "There was nothing unusual in her speech, gait or mannerisms. She was entirely appropriate."

An eyewitness, however, has told law enforcement officials that Adams was stumbling as she headed for her car and that the man with her was holding her to keep her from falling.

- "After speaking with Ms. Adams for another five minutes, I told her I had to get on the Skyway to my mother's house," the judge wrote. "She told me she was heading to her home in Angola on the same route. I drove over the Skyway to South Buffalo with Ms. Adams' vehicle in my continuous presence."

But an eyewitness told authorities

Makowski also got into Adams' car, and the two sat inside the car for about 20 minutes. Adams then pulled her convertible into another part of the Shanghai Red's restaurant parking lot, near the marina.

That is where she backed into a parked car before pulling away.

A Buffalo police officer, parked nearby, noticed what happened and pulled up alongside her vehicle. He recognized Adams and said to her, "Counselor, where are you going?" a law enforcement source told The News.

The judge was in Adams' car at the time, the same source said.

Adams then parked her car and went into the restaurant to try to find out who owned the car she had struck with her vehicle. A restaurant employee discovered the car belonged to another employee.

A few days later, Adams sent a pay-

ment of several hundred dollars to the employee to cover the damage.

- "We traveled along Route 5, which is now under construction," wrote Makowski, who was following her in his car. "Her driving was entirely appropriate. She drove at the appropriate speed, she negotiated turns and tight construction lanes properly."

But another driver later reported an erratic driver in that area. Hamburg Police Officer Vincent Pupo III pulled Adams' vehicle over when he saw her convertible weaving from lane to lane, nearly striking a guardrail, near Ford Motor Co.'s Buffalo Stamping Plant, according to a police report.

e-mail: plakamp@buffnews.com
and gwarner@buffnews.com

Is Clarence 'repeat of Roselawn'?

ICING • from A1

plane in Clarence Center on Feb. 12, but the agency previously said ice had formed on the wings.

That fact has led many in the aviation community to doubt the recent speculation that pilot error could have been at fault — and to point to the parallels between the Clarence crash and that Indiana tragedy from 1994.

On Oct. 31 of that year, an American Eagle flight left Indianapolis for Chicago, only to plunge to the ground in Roselawn, Ind., killing all 68 people aboard.

"The real question is: Is this really a repeat of Roselawn?" said James P. Kreindler of Kreindler & Kreindler.

That's what relatives of the Roselawn victims are wondering, too.

"We had the plane on autopilot, we had icing," said Miller, who lost her brother, Brad Stansberry, in the crash. "We rolled, we nose-dived, we pitched. We did all of that. The similarities between these two accidents is just eerie."

After a long investigation, the federal safety board concluded that the plane — an ATR 72 turboprop similar to the one that crashed in Clarence — lost control because of ice accumulation behind the pneumatic de-icing boots that were supposed to knock the ice off the plane's wings.

Could that have happened to the Bombardier Dash 8 Q400 that crashed in Clarence?

Authorities and other aviation experts said that it's too soon to tell, but some wonder whether the particularly dangerous kind of icing that doomed that plane in Indiana did the same thing over Clarence.

Called "supercooled large droplet icing" in aviation terminology, it's essentially freezing rain that sticks to the airplane. Aviation experts said it's far more dangerous than the more common thin glaze that can adhere to a plane when it flies through thick, cold clouds.

"Supercooled large droplets can result in very rapid ice accumulation," said William R. Voss, president of the Flight Safety Foundation.

While pneumatic de-icing boots can knock off ice from upward of 40 percent of a wing's surface, supercooled large droplet ice can form on the back of the wing where it can't be removed, said Tom Ratvasky, an icing research engineer at NASA's Glenn Research Center in Cleveland.

Donald Pugh, a longtime freight and corporate pilot from Elmsdale, Pa., learned that the hard way back in 1988, when ice formed on the wings of the plane he was flying to Buffalo. He had to accelerate to maintain control.

"Suddenly you're flying with a whole new airfoil," said Pugh, who, when he landed, found a ridge of ice, 2 inches wide and three-quarters of an inch thick, on the wings of his plane.

Pugh said the Buffalo area is particularly prone to icing incidents, and NASA proves his point.

A NASA map shows a 500-mile-wide circle, with Buffalo at its center like a bull's eye, that's prone to icing conditions 50 percent of the time or more during winter — the most in the country, along with the Pacific Northwest.

Aviation experts said such icing is less likely to be a problem for jets, which are equipped with anti-icing equipment such as heated wings to keep ice from forming.

But the smaller turboprops such as the Dash 8 are equipped with pneumatic de-icing boots that, some experts said, just can't knock off enough ice if freezing rain is pelting a plane at a fast clip.

"The use of de-icing boots is outrageous in these conditions," said Arthur A. Wolk, a pilot and aviation attorney from Philadelphia. "The FAA had no business certifying the plane to fly in these conditions."

Laura Brown, a spokeswoman for the Federal Aviation Administration, disagreed. "The plane had a

sophisticated ice-detection and -protection system," Brown said. "It can be flown in light to moderate icing," which is the condition pilots experienced near Buffalo on the night of the crash.

Roger Cohen, president of the Regional Airline Alliance, also defended Colgan Air's use of the Dash 8 in icy conditions.

"The aircraft are all certified to operate in every environment," said Cohen, whose organization counts Colgan as a member. "They would not be operating or certificated if they weren't being operated safely."

Yet the National Transportation Safety Board has been pressing the FAA for years to bolster its icing regulations, including the certification process for turboprops that would fly in icy climates.

The FAA says that its rulemaking process takes a long time and that possible regulations are moving forward. But Terri Henry Severin, who lost her sister and nephew in Roselawn, said industry cost concerns have probably delayed any new regulations.

"I think the obvious issue is money versus safety and security," said Severin, who has compiled a list of a dozen icing incidents and accidents worldwide in the last 15 years involving turboprops with pneumatic de-icing systems.

Indeed, heated-wing anti-icing systems are more expensive than the pneumatic boot system on turboprops, said Michael B. Bragg, an engineering professor who heads the University of Illinois Aircraft Icing Research Group.

"It takes a lot more power. It reduces fuel efficiency," Bragg said.

The pneumatic de-icing boot system has been around since the 1930s and efficiently removes ice from most planes, Bragg said.

But based on what he has learned so far about the Clarence crash, he said, "it certainly sounds like a possibility that it's icing."

e-mail: jzremski@buffnews.com



Derek Gee/Buffalo News

A worker removes material from a damaged garage at the site of the plane crash at 6038 Long St. in Clarence Center on Thursday.

Wielinski doesn't want house built on plane crash site

SITE • from A1

biting, wind-whipped snow. The end result will be an empty lot, which is what Karen Wielinski wants for now.

"She's told me they do not want a house built on that site," said Clarence Town Supervisor Scott Bylewski, who added that he cannot reveal more about her plans for the site. "It was a private conversation with her."

Wielinski and her daughter Jill managed to escape after the commuter plane crashed on top of their house at 6038 Long St. Doug Wielinski, Karen's husband, died.

And as the remediation work progressed, with an oversized backhoe filling dump trucks with concrete chunks and other debris, several other workers dressed in white and yellow jumpsuits filed in and out of the Wielinskis' scorched garage.

They carefully carried cardboard boxes containing what was believed to be part of Doug Wielinski's cherished sports memorabilia collection.

His widow has told friends she wants all of his collection, even if it is damaged, because it is all she has left of him.

The garage and a one-story, beige-brick house next door at 6032 Long St., which also received structural damage, will soon be razed — further altering this cozy neighborhood, where in the last several days 1,185 emergency responders toiled at different times.

By mid-afternoon Thursday, the final pieces of aircraft, hidden beneath blue and white tarpaulins, were hauled away on four trailers.

The parts included the dismantled tail of the commuter plane, destroyed landing gear, charred and shredded fuselage — all bound for "an undisclosed, secure location," according to David Bissonette, the town's emergency services coordinator.

The removal marked a minor event in a

week that has been packed with more than enough tragedy to last this hamlet a lifetime.

Conceding that it will take time before Long Street reclaims its residential character, Bissonette said the recovery will happen in stages — with an emphasis on keeping "gawkers" at bay.

Sunday, it is expected the dozen evacuated families will return, along with others who voluntarily left the neighborhood. For 48 hours, the street will remain cordoned off to give residents time to adjust.

"Clearly our objective is to get the physical site back in order," Bissonette said. "Emotionally it will take many weeks and months to accomplish the same."

After the 48 hours, he said, the street will be open to public access, with a police presence involving state troopers and Erie County sheriff's deputies.

"There will be a patrol car working that specific block for the foreseeable future," Bissonette said.

Eventually the dedicated police patrols will end, and at that point, it is hoped, "the neighborhood will be returned to something of a normal lifestyle," Bissonette said.

"This weekend will probably be the toughest as families return and resume their lives on Long Street," Bylewski said. "We are all grieving and trying to help each other heal, and we will move forward while remembering what has happened as a community."

But for those who lost loved ones on the flight, the grief remained clear throughout Thursday as they paid visits to the Long Street site, some accompanied by police escorts, others on their own.

e-mail: lmichel@buffnews.com

Union airs alert on guidance signals

FAA says glitch is not due to the system but to the terrain

By SHARON LINSTEDT
NEWS BUSINESS REPORTER

As the investigation into the crash of Continental Connection Flight 3407 continues, the union representing Southwest Airlines pilots advised its crews of a Federal Aviation Administration alert regarding a problem with signals that guide landings at Buffalo Niagara International Airport.

The reissued alert, which originally went out to all airlines in late January, indicated a glitch in the FAA's instrument landing system's "glide slope guidance signal" leading to the main runway.

The anomaly involves one of the

series of ground-to-plane signals along the runway approach, which falsely indicate aircraft are flying above their actual altitude. The false reading is received as planes approach from the north and make a right turn toward Runway 23.

The Continental Connection flight involved in the Feb. 12 crash would not have been affected by the signal issue. It was traveling in the opposite direction, coming in from the south and turning left.

The pilots union's version of the alert described the signal issue a "potentially significant hazard," language that was not in the original FAA advisory or the alert Southwest passed on to its flight crews.

Laura Brown, an FAA spokeswoman, said the pilots union alert misrepresents a long-standing signal situation for pilots landing at the Buffalo airport. She said the "glitch" is caused by a small valley on the landing path, not a system malfunction.

"It's the result of a geographic feature which has been on the charts for as long as this runway has been in use. It's been part of our standard information to pilots for years," Brown said.

She said it is not unusual for information like this to be taken out of context following accidents.

e-mail: slinstedt@buffnews.com

Last year, 41% of filers used paper

TAX • from A1

electronic filing to save on paper and processing costs.

Late last year, state tax officials said they no longer would mail out tax forms unless people requested them. At the time, they noted that 93 percent of filers use computer software and the Internet to do their taxes.

But that doesn't mean that

93 percent avoid using paper or the mail entirely, said Tom Bergin, spokesman for the state Department of Taxation and Finance.

That percentage includes people who print out tax forms from the state's taxation Web site (<http://www.tax.state.ny.us/forms>) or from a commercial software program such as TurboTax or another source, then mail them.

Mailed returns are processed by workers at Bank of America.

In 2008, 41 percent of state income tax returns were filed on paper.

Canestrari suggested that the 93 percent figure is disingenuous. "It certainly is confusing, and it doesn't seem consistent with the facts," he said.

Bergin said the number simply illustrates how many people are using some sort of nonpaper, non-mail services.

Corrections

An article Wednesday about the experience levels of pilots at regional airlines quoted industry expert Douglas M. Moss. He has about 10,000 hours of flight experience, not 30,000 hours as the article stated.

WNYO Channel 49 will continue to broadcast over an analog signal until June 12, the new federal deadline for all TV stations to begin broadcasting exclusively in a digital signal. An article in Wednesday's News incorrectly stated that WNYO would drop its analog signal by Wednesday, the original deadline for the digital TV conver-

sion. WNYO had intended to meet the earlier deadline for the switchover but recently opted to wait.

• • •

The Buffalo News corrects published errors of substance. To request a correction, please notify the editor by writing to: P.O. Box 100, Buffalo, NY 14240. Or call The News at 849-4444 and ask to speak to the editor of the department in which the article was published. Or fax your request to 856-5150.

